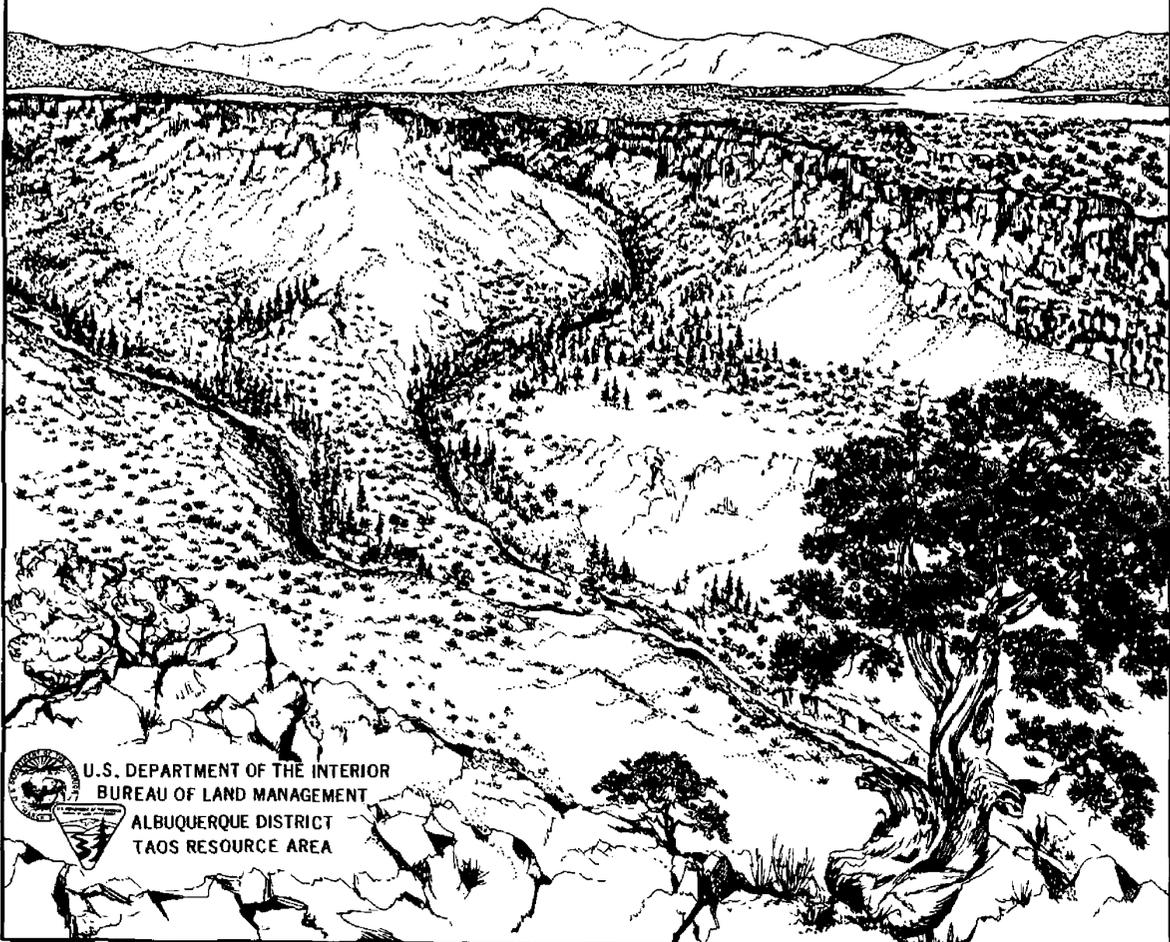


Wild Rivers

Recreation Area Management Plan



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
ALBUQUERQUE DISTRICT
TAOS RESOURCE AREA

9107982





Arthur W. Zimmerman

BLM State Director, N.M.

1973-1980

Arthur Zimmerman was born in Fairfield, Montana, shortly after World War I. He grew up on a small ranch and graduated from the University of Montana in 1942. Art began his Bureau career in 1956 in Dillon, Montana, after service in World War II and Korea as a U.S. Marine Corps officer. Art served as a Range Conservationist, District Manager, and Associate State Director in various locations prior to his selection as State Director of New Mexico in 1973. Art played an important role in the initial development of the Wild Rivers Recreation Area. The Visitors Center at the Recreation Area is named in his honor. We dedicate our efforts on this plan to Art and the American people he served.

BLM-NM-PT-88-002-4333



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United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

TAOS RESOURCE AREA

Dear Reader:

The Wild Rivers Recreation Area is an important recreation attraction for the people of New Mexico and the Nation. The dramatic canyons of the Rio Grande and Red River with their unique ecosystems are the principal features of the area. These rivers were among the original eight designated as "Wild and Scenic" by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 and were the first to be formally designated in May 1970. The scenic beauty, abundant wildlife, archaeological sites, visitor facilities and environmental education programs make this an area all can enjoy.

The Bureau of Land Management is giving increased attention to providing recreational opportunities on the public lands. The importance of this initiative cannot be overstated. Public demand for recreational areas is increasing across a nation which has become more mobile. Our highways are filled by a populace anxious to explore America's natural beauty. The Bureau is also aware that the positive economic effects of tourism has meant new life for many communities in northcentral New Mexico.

Our challenge is to manage this area to meet growing recreation demands and to provide for economic benefits, while at the same time protecting the natural beauty of the area at minimal expense to the taxpayer. This document, The Management Plan, describes how the Bureau intends to accomplish these goals.

This plan and the renewed emphasis on recreation in the Bureau are two key elements in ensuring the Wild Rivers Recreation Area remains a special place for ourselves, our children, and future generations. We hope they will approve of what we do.



Larry Woodard
New Mexico State Director



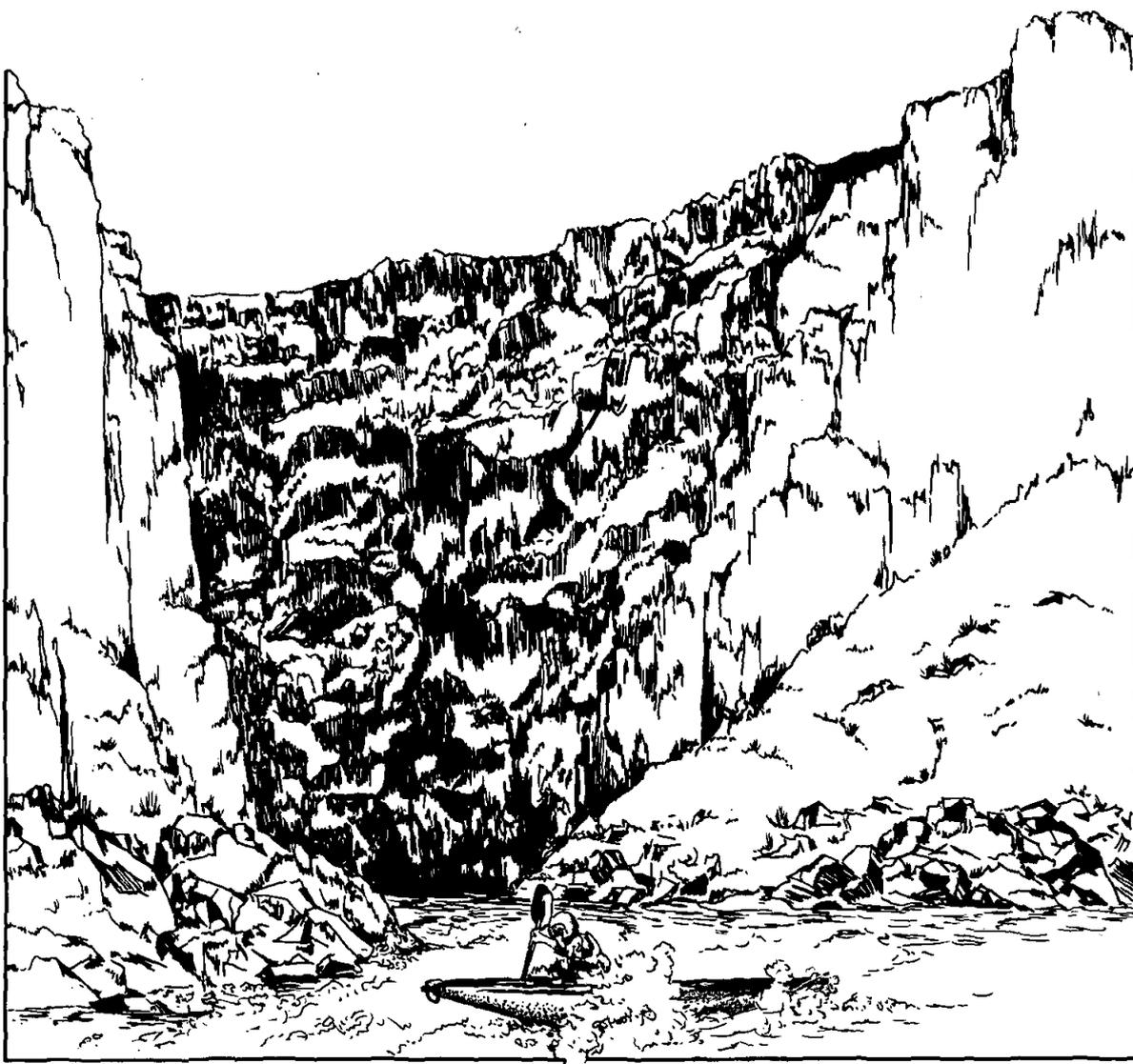
Bob Dale
Albuquerque District Manager



Dan Wood
Taos Resource Area Manager

"We are here not to commemorate what man has done to these rivers, but to commemorate what he has not done. He has not spoiled them!"

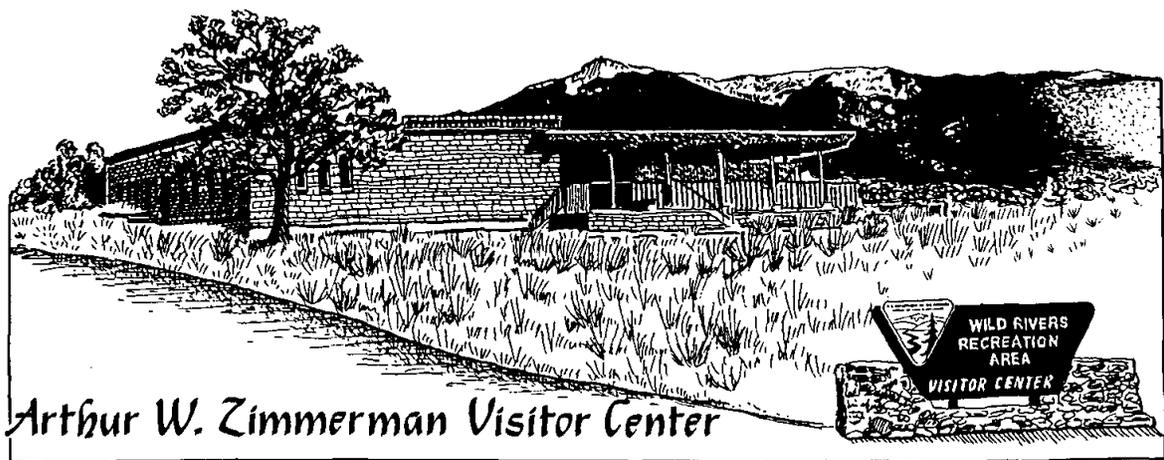
– Boyd Rasmussen, Former BLM Director
Wild Rivers Recreation Area 1973



Wild Rivers Recreation Area Management Plan

February 1988

PREPARED BY:
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
ALBUQUERQUE DISTRICT OFFICE
TAOS RESOURCE AREA



Arthur W. Zimmerman Visitor Center

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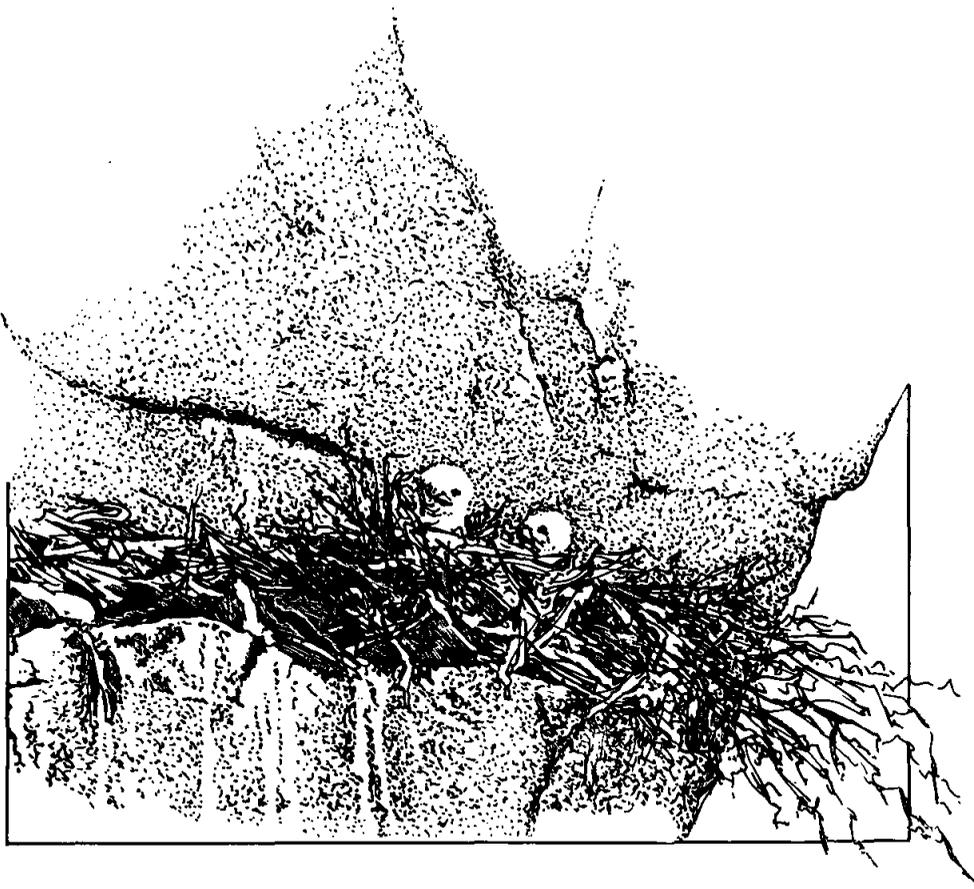
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Introduction

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this plan is to reaffirm and update goals, objectives, and management direction that will guide the interpretation, management, and future development of the Wild Rivers Recreation Area. This direction is to ensure that visitor management and facility maintenance, remodeling and expansion are done in a manner that maintains or enhances recreational and scenic values, and ensures that management and development are intensified and expanded in a timely manner to accommodate increased use levels.

In years to come, issues not expressly covered by this plan will require that portions of this plan be amended. This plan will be reviewed each year, with rewrite of the plan scheduled in not more than ten years.



Background

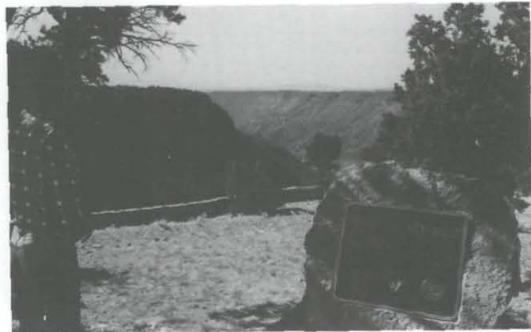
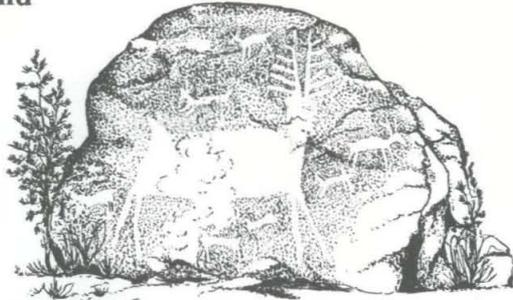
For centuries the Rio Grande has been an important river travel route in the region. In prehistoric times the canyons of the Wild Rivers Recreation Area hosted many visitors, probably more than today. Evidence remains of this early visitation including abundant rock art, flakes and chips of tool working, and other artifacts.

An important milestone in the development of this area occurred in 1963 when the Bureau of Land Management constructed roads, trails and facilities. These improvements along the rim were developed under the Accelerated Public Works Act of 1962. These facilities were then temporarily managed by the New Mexico State Parks and Recreation Commission.

Another important point in the development of the area was passage of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in 1968. These sections of the Rio Grande and Red Rivers were among the original eight rivers designated in the Act. A Management Plan was completed in 1969, for the newly designated Wild and Scenic River Canyons, including what is now the Wild Rivers Recreation Area. At this time the BLM resumed management responsibility for facilities in this area. Then, in 1975, the BLM made another major investment the area by adding the present Visitor Center, a water system, a paved access road and other facilities. This development followed the guidance of the original Management Plan.

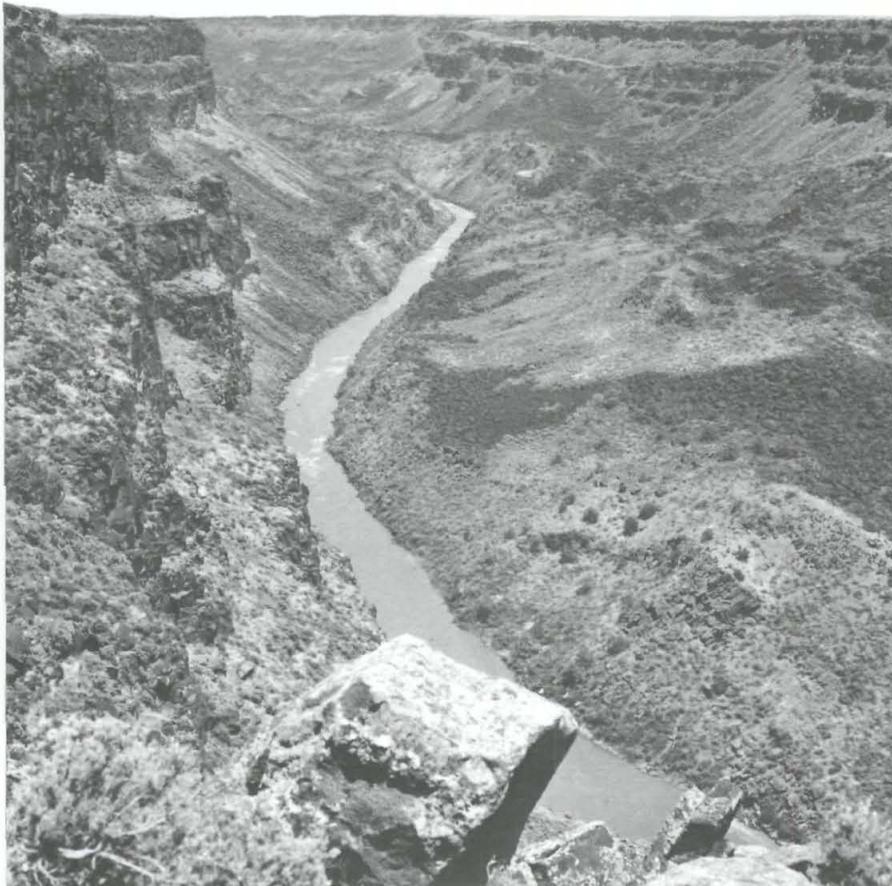
Present facilities are much as they were in 1975. Management since that time has focused on the large maintenance workload and providing basic visitor services during the summer months.

In 1984, a new Management Plan was written for the entire Wild and Scenic River Canyons, including the Wild Rivers Recreation Area. In 1987, the Taos Resource Area completed a land use planning process in the Resource Management Plan. This plan reaffirmed these portions of the Rio Grande and Red Rivers as a Recreation Area and called for a revised plan for the area to be developed. This document is that revised plan.



Setting

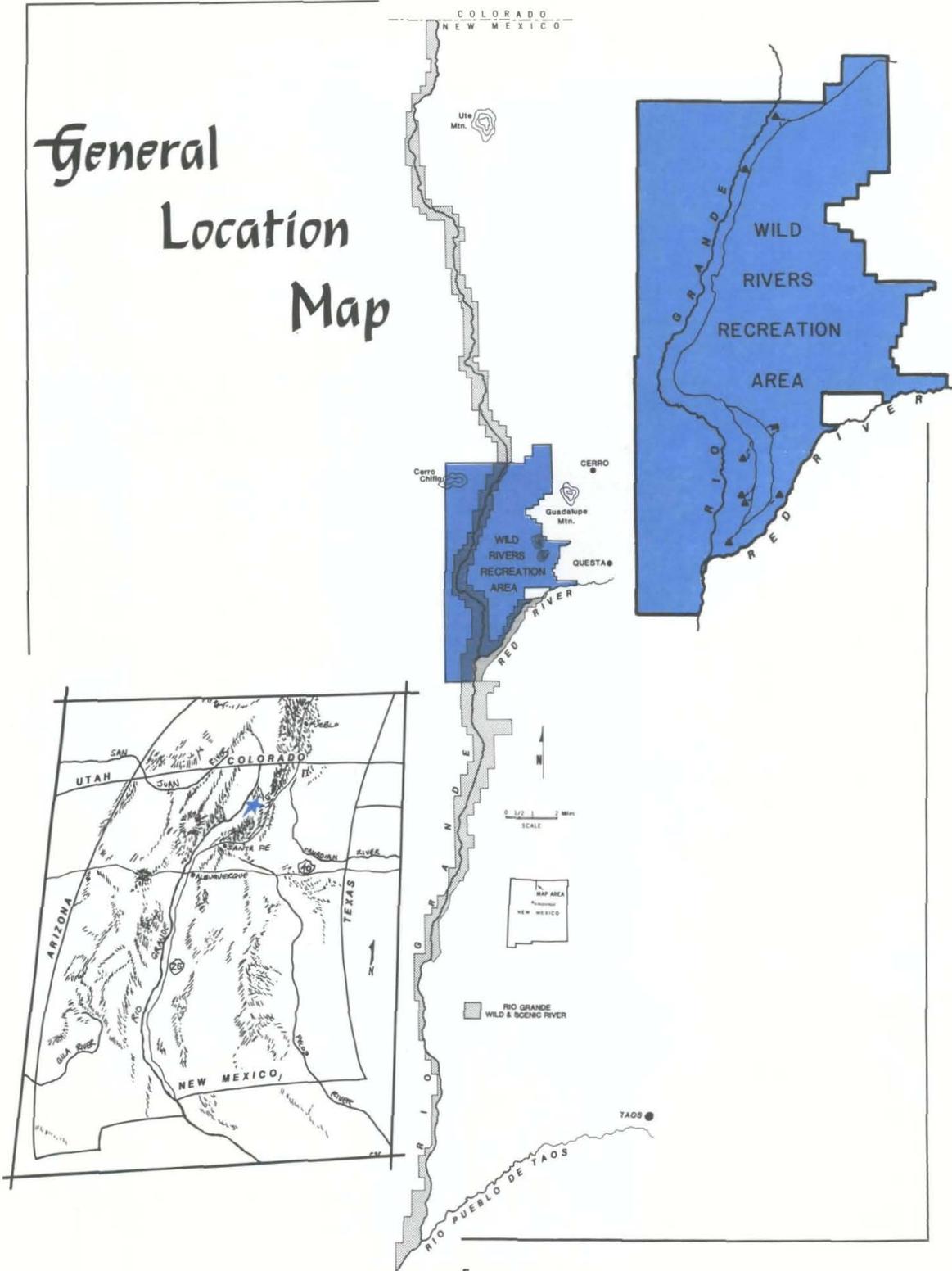
The Wild Rivers Recreation Area is located in northcentral New Mexico, about 20 miles from the Colorado border (see the General Location Map). Tree covered volcanic cones are connected by their once active lava flows in the region. Here, the Red River joins the Rio Grande in a setting of deep canyons carved hundreds of feet down into the high sagebrush plateau. These rivers are fast moving and the rough action of the "white water" continues to carve even deeper into the old lava flows.



Campgrounds and picnic areas are located both high on the rims overlooking the canyons and within the canyons themselves, and are connected by a trail system. These developed sites, a Visitor Center and other support facilities are situated in piñon-juniper woodlands, carefully screened from the view of most visitors.

The area has a high level of topographic, vegetative and wildlife diversity. Hawks and eagles are commonly sighted in the area, as are deer, coyotes, rabbits and many other species.

General Location Map



Management Direction

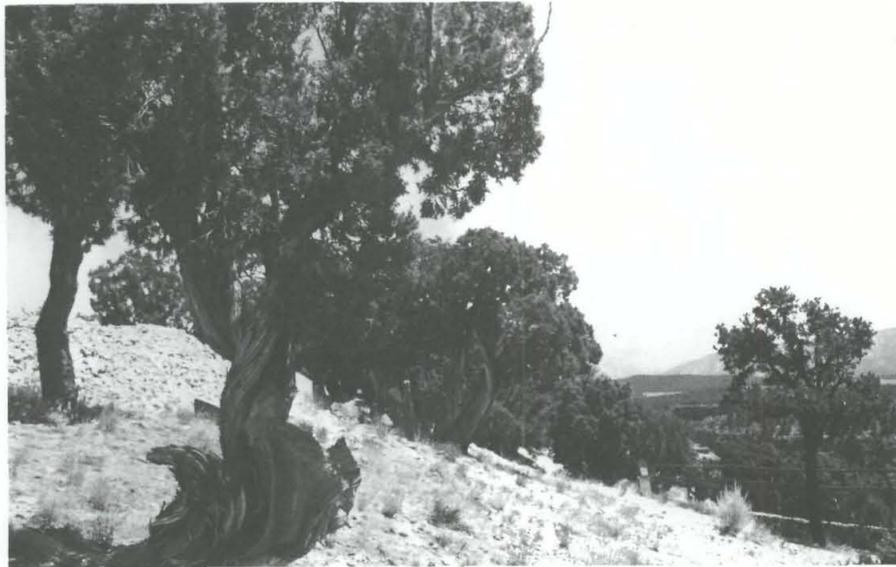
Management Principles

The Wild Rivers Recreation Area will be managed in a manner which recognizes the rivers and their canyons as the principle features. The area will provide many varied settings for day use and overnight camping by both the local populace and visitors from other states.

Management will emphasize providing a natural setting for viewing and interpreting the rivers, their canyons, and the wildlife they contain.

Facilities will be limited to the minimum necessary to provide environmental interpretation, resource protection, and basic visitor services such as campsites with tables and fireplaces. Most of the Recreation Area will be accessible by motor vehicles, with some areas (such as the river canyons) limited to foot traffic only.

The Recreation Area will be managed to provide a quality outdoor experience by limiting visitor use to establish carrying capacity described in this and future management plans.



Present Situation

The Wild Rivers Recreation Area is located in Taos County, an area heavily dependent upon tourism. Recent trends in tourism indicate a moderately steady growth. The Wild Rivers Recreation Area has similarly experienced an increase in annual visitation over the last ten years. The Recreation Area has the potential to be one of the more important attractions in the area. Expanded use of the Recreation Area can provide both direct and indirect dollars to Taos County.

Visitor use is seasonal, with the greatest attendance occurring from early April through late September. Over 90 percent of the visitation is day use with an average length of stay around three hours. Visitor use is generally highest on weekends with peak season and peak day volumes frequently exceeding the capacity of the existing facilities. For an examination of the facilities and activities existing in 1988, see the chart, "Existing Site Facilities and Activities" on the next page. The associated site map shows the location of these existing facilities.

The analysis of information for this area revealed a number of issues requiring management attention. Some of these issues, briefly identified here, are the principle focus of the management direction found in this document.

Campgrounds, developed 25 years ago, do not satisfy the requirements for the present forms of motorized camping. These campgrounds also serve as picnic areas and trailheads. During peak periods, these areas overlap and cause crowding, and poor parking situations.

Visitor center's effectiveness to serve as the point of contact for visitors is diminished by its location. Interpretative displays located at the visitor center are in need of upgrading as is the roof and public contact rooms within the building.

Roads serving as the only access to the visitor facilities are in very poor condition. Parking areas for the campgrounds, picnic area, overlooks, and trailheads need better definition. Indiscriminate parking which compacts the ground is causing vegetation and soil loss. Circulation within the parking areas is difficult for long wheelbase vehicles causing tree limbs to be broken while visitors try to negotiate the tight spaces.

Administration of the site relies heavily upon temporary personnel and volunteer labor. This means new personnel virtually every year. Managing the Recreation Area places high demands on regular staff who must balance this operation with others in the Taos Resource Area.

Environmental education programs require special emphasis. Currently this activity is handled by a temporary staff member. If this opportunity is to be fully realized, additional commitment toward interpretive services (staffing), signing, and displays will be needed.

Non-BLM Land (1167 acres of the State of New Mexico and 955 acres in private ownership) represent interests which could someday be managed counter to the Recreation Area goals.

Mineral exploration and development could compromise the natural values of the area.

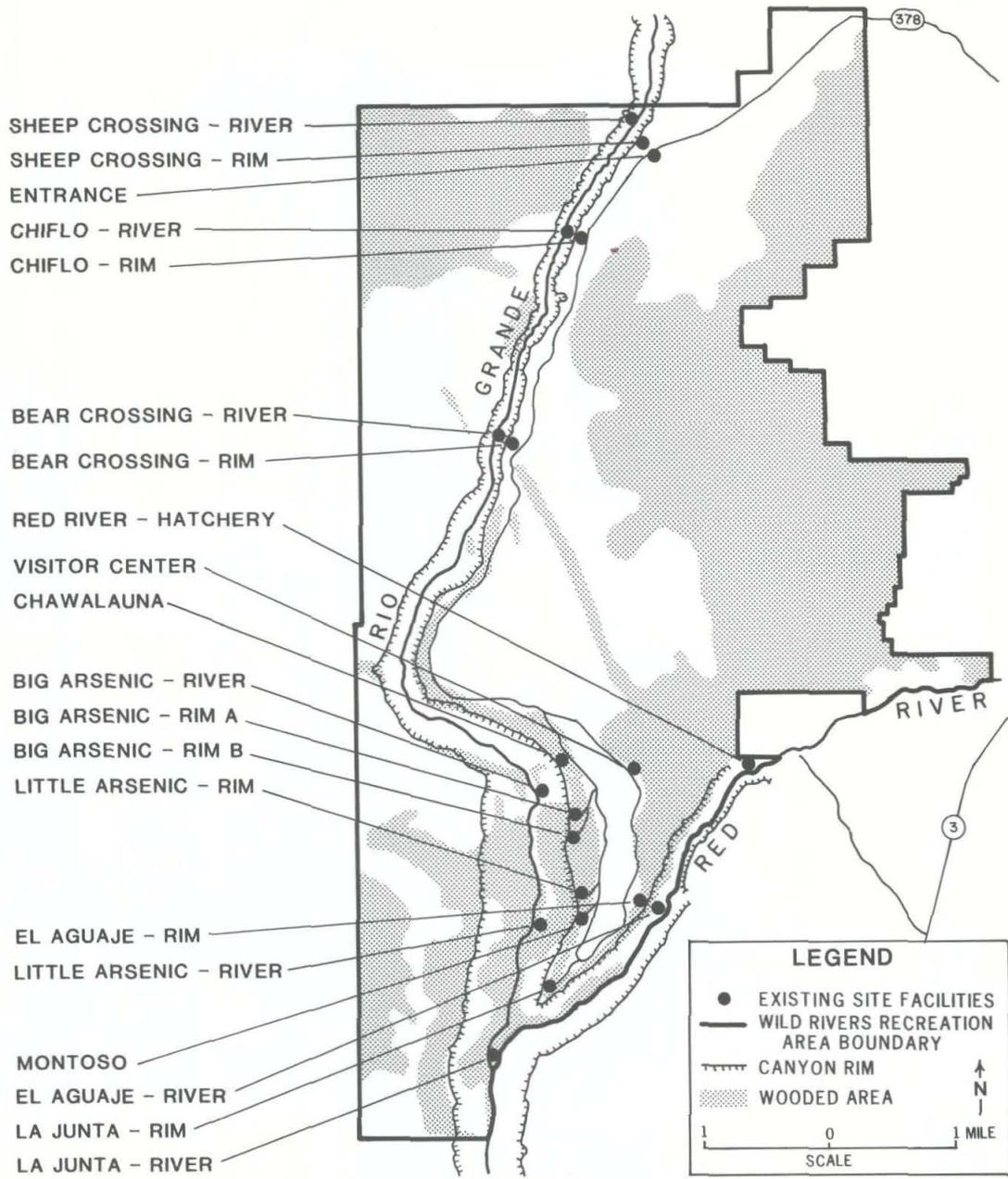
**WILD RIVERS RECREATION AREAS
EXISTING SITE FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES**

SITES	FACILITIES										ACTIVITIES						
	OVERLOOK	* SHELTER DRIVE-IN	SHELTER WALK-IN	** PICNIC TABLE ONLY	PIT TOILET	DRINKING WATER	OVERNIGHT PAY STATION	*** PARKING	TRAILHEAD	DAY HIKING	BACKPACKING	PICNICKING	CAMPING	FISHING	ARCHEOLOGICAL STUDY	BOAT LAUNCH	
SHEEP CROSSING RIM	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	4	1	***	*	***	**				
SHEEP CROSSING RIVER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	***	*	**	*	***			
CHIFLO RIM	0	3	0	0	2	1	0	4	1	**	*	***	*				
CHIFLO RIVER	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	-	**	*	*	*	***			
BEAR CROSSING RIM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	1	*		*					
BEAR CROSSING RIVER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	*		*		*			
CHAWALAUNA	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	7	0			*					
BIG ARSENIC RIM A	0	3	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	***	**	**	***				
BIG ARSENIC RIM B	0	3	0	0	2	1	1	5	1	***	**	**	***				
BIG ARSENIC RIVER	0	0	6	0	1	0	0	0	-	***	**	***	**	**	*		
LITTLE ARSENIC RIM	0	3	0	0	2	1	1	3	1	**	*	*	***				
LITTLE ARSENIC RIVER	0	0	5	0	2	0	0	0	-	**	*	*	*	**	*	*	
MONTOSO	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	**	*	*	*				
LA JUNTA RIM	1	0	6	0	2	1	1	15	2	**	*	***	**				
LA JUNTA RIVER	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	-	**	*	**	*	***			
EL AGUAJE RIM	0	5	0	0	2	1	1	3	1	***	*	**	***				
EL AGUAJE RIVER	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	-	***	*	*	*	***			
RED RIVER HATCHERY	0	0	0	5	2	0	0	0	1	***	*	***	*	***			

VISITOR CENTER INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:
 INTERPRETIVE DISPLAY - INDOOR & OUTDOOR (CAPACITY 30 PEOPLE)
 6 FLUSH TOILETS
 DRINKING WATER FROM SEVERAL SOURCES
 HANDICAPPED PARKING FOR 2 VEHICLES & ACCESS TO VC & BATHROOMS
 PARKING FOR APPROX. 30 VEHICLES
 AMPHITHEATER WITH ELECTRIC HOOK-UP & SCREEN - SEATS 25 PEOPLE

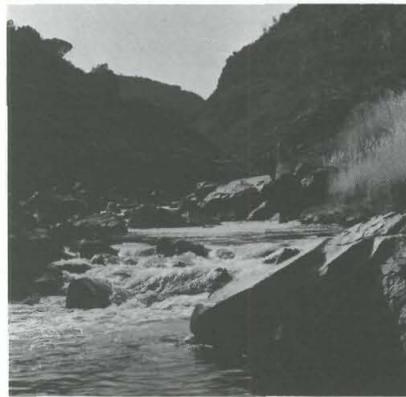
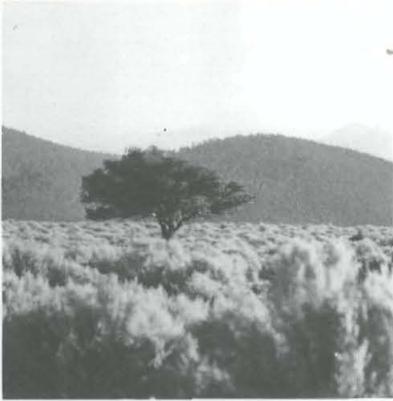
INTENSITY OF USE
 LIGHT *
 MODERATE **
 HEAVY ***

* ALL SHELTERS INCLUDE A PICNIC TABLE, A GRILL, & A TRASH RECEPTACLE
 ** ALL PICNIC TABLES (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE RED RIVER HATCHERY) INCLUDE A GRILL & A TRASH RECEPTACLE
 *** CAR PARKING SPACES SEPARATE FROM SHELTER AREAS



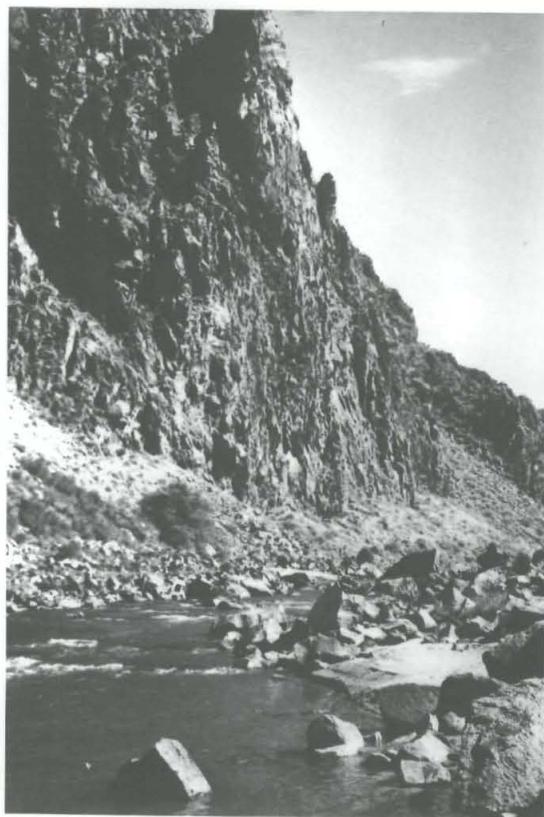
**WILD RIVERS RECREATION AREA
 SITE LOCATIONS**

Management Actions



This section describes individual actions which together form the Management Plan for the Wild Rivers Recreation Area. The information is presented by zones identified to facilitate planning and management. Specific locations within the Recreation Area differ in features, topography, vegetation, and type of use and, therefore, also differ in management emphasis. Identifying zones allows management prescriptions and resulting actions to be more precisely applied to specific areas.

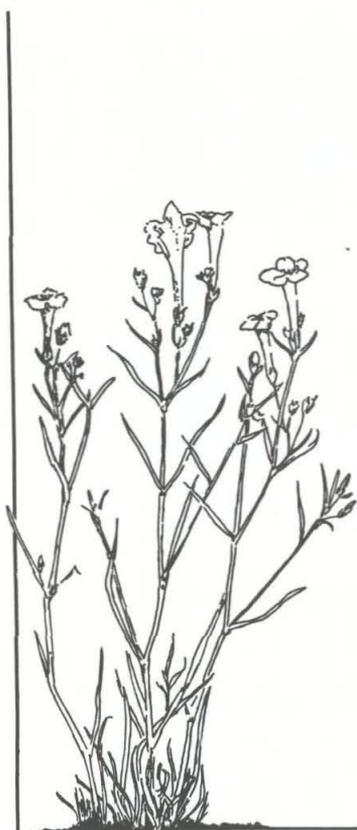
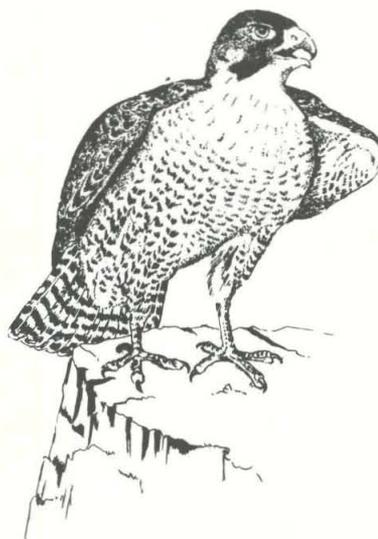
All zones are dependent on one another; together they make up an area providing a wide variety of recreation opportunities.

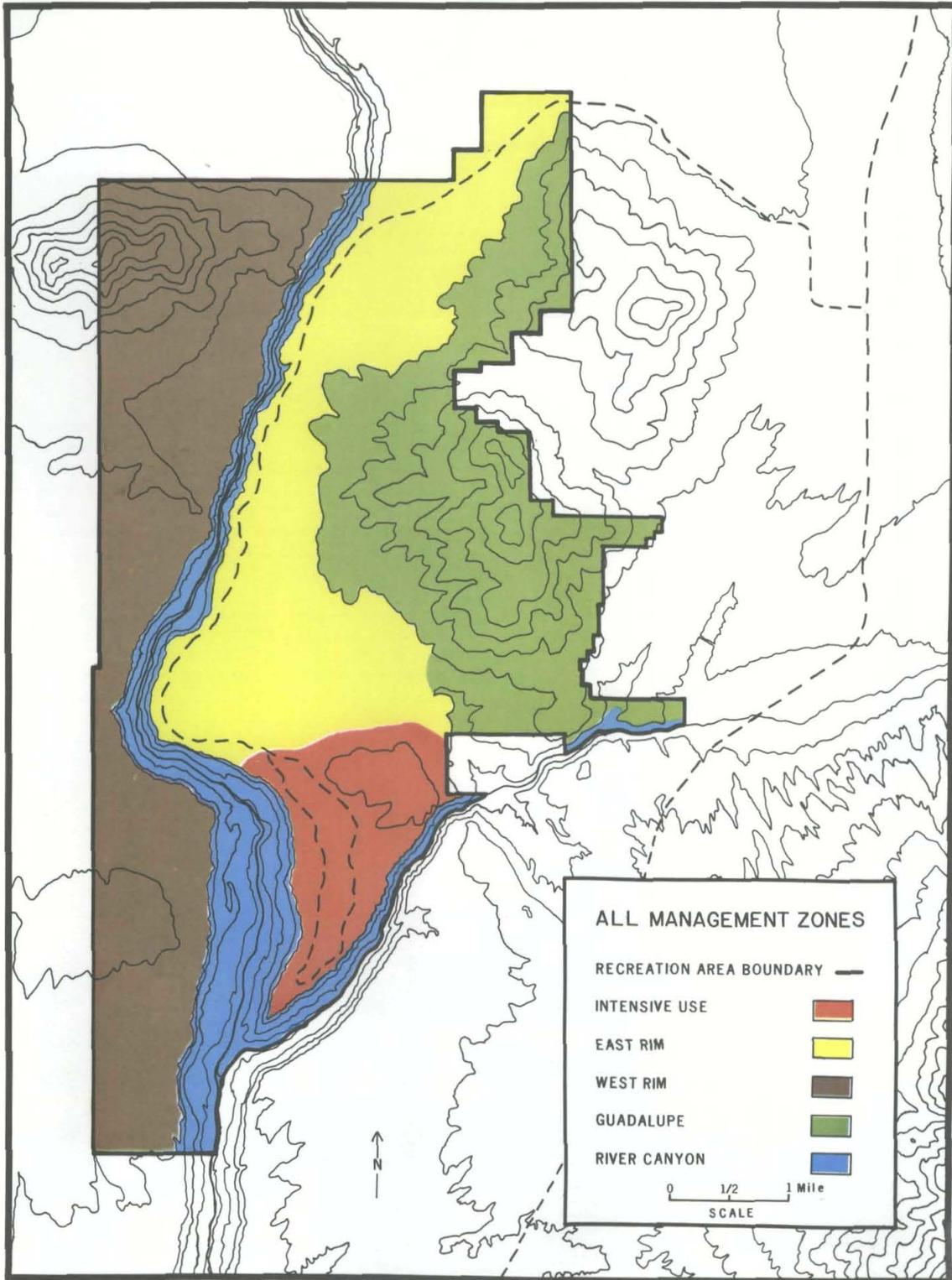


All Zones

"All Zones" refers to the total Recreation Area. Management prescriptions and actions cited here are common to each zone. They are grouped here to alleviate redundancy.

Each topic in this section has been given an identification code that allows the reader to follow individual actions through the document and through the implementation plan described in the final section of this document. The letter portion of the identification code represents the zone (A-All Zones, I-Intensive Use Zone, etc.) and the numbers portion of the identification code represents the specific management action within a zone. For example, A-1 identifies the first management action in the All Zones section (Scenic Quality).





Scenic Quality (A-1)

Objective: To maintain the scenic quality of the Wild Rivers Recreation Area, with emphasis on the Rivers and their canyons.

Present Situation: The Recreation Area is highly scenic and viewing of scenery, especially the rivers and their canyons, is both a primary and secondary use of the area. There are, however, some facilities, structures, and surface disturbances located both inside and outside the area boundaries which compromise scenic quality to a minor degree. Visual intrusions inside the Recreation Area include a Federal Aviation Administration garage, BLM's warehouse, powerlines, fencelines, litter and the stumps and debris of occasional illegal woodcutting. None of these are a significant visual intrusion. Visual intrusions outside but near the Recreation Area include the Cerro community landfill and powerlines.

Management Prescription

No further degradation of scenic quality will be allowed. Protection of the areas scenic quality will be a primary consideration in facility design. Placement of future facilities will require special attention to minimize visual conflicts due to the openness of much of the area.

Facilities within the River Canyon Zone must blend with the surroundings. Facilities in the other zone: may be seen but must not attract attention. There will be no development inside the "loop area" of the Intensive Use Zone.

Management Actions

Specifications for each proposed facility will include visual consideration relating to size, shape, use of materials, color and basic harmony with the setting. A set of guidelines of acceptable materials and colors will accompany all construction packages. Prior and during construction, the contractor will be informed of actions which would compromise the management prescription.

The Federal Aviation Administration will be asked to relocate or paint their garage located in the East Rim Zone to minimize adverse visual impacts.

The trailers used as temporary housing for seasonal help will be relocated or painted to meet visual requirements.



Land Ownership and Designations (A-2)

Objective: To acquire BLM control of all lands within the boundaries of the Recreation Area and provide the designations and restrictions necessary to ensure that future activities and actions will conform to the goals and objectives of this plan.

Present Situation: There are two sections of land within the Recreation Area owned by the State of New Mexico. One of these sections contains BLM recreational facilities that are allowed by the state under a cooperative agreement with BLM. Both sections are leased for grazing and contain minimal grazing developments.

There are two parcels of private lands along the western boundary of the Recreation Area. These lands are located west of the Rio Grande, and are therefore inaccessible from most of the area. These lands see little use except for grazing and occasional hunting.

There is a small electrical powerline crossing the northern portion of the Recreation Area from east to west. This line is visible along the entrance road but not visible from most areas that receive concentrated visitor use. The rivers and their canyons in the Recreation Area have been designated as National Wild and Scenic Rivers. This designation carries with it certain management directions and restrictions which are imposed by Congress to preserve the rivers and their canyons in their natural state. The boundaries of this designation do not contain all of the Rio Grande river canyon in two places.

The BLM lands in the Recreation Area are open to mining exploration and development under the authority of the 1872 Mining Law. BLM lands along the eastern boundary, but outside of the Recreation Area, have been claimed for a mine tailings disposal site under this law. There has been no mining exploration and development within the Recreation Area and inventories show a low potential for the presence of minerals.

Management Prescription

Acquire control of non-BLM land within the boundaries of the Recreation Area through easements or change of ownership as owners are willing.

Allow no new rights-of-way which would create developments in conflict with the goals of this plan.

Seek revised boundaries for the Wild and Scenic River designation to include the entire Rio Grande river canyon under its protection.

Review existing appropriations and permits for compliance with the goals described in this plan.

Management Actions

Initiate mineral entry withdrawal procedures within one year. Initiate acquisition of State sections with the State Land Commissioner with a target for acquiring jurisdiction in five years. Explore the use of scenic easements or acquisition of private lands within the Recreation Area if owners are willing. Prepare formal amendment to the Wild and Scenic River boundary and forward to Washington within one year. Establish new conditions for existing authorizations as appropriate to meet goals and prescriptions.



Site Administration (A-3)

Objective: To provide supervision, maintenance and visitor services necessary to operate an efficient, safe and enjoyable Recreation Area.

Present Situation: The Recreation Area has no permanent full-time staff. The supervision of the area is by the recreation staff leader in the Taos Resource Area. A temporary appointment is given to a Park Manager (5 months) and an Environmental Education Specialist (5 months) scheduled from the first of May to the end of September. A maintenance foreman, a permanent BLM employee, works for the Resource Area dividing time between the Recreation Area and other duties within the Resource Area. A Work Study Program utilizes three to four college students as Park Aides who work during the summer season. There are Cooperative Agreements with the Volunteers for the Outdoors and Eagle Nest Camp to provide volunteer personnel to build trails and other minor construction in the area.

This level of operations is minimal and annually subject to reduction in fiscal support. Operations and services rely heavily upon volunteer and work study students. This requires training and an assumption that this temporary workforce is capable of performing all the necessary functions. If the volunteer and work study programs should cease to exist in the future, this would result in a severe impact on visitor services and general operation of the area.

Management Prescription

The Bureau of Land Management will manage and maintain the Recreation Area to provide basic services, including visitor safety and interpretive programs, to meet the objectives stated in this document. As visitor use increases, there will be an appropriate increase in BLM personnel. Base program funding will provide a core of skilled personnel capable of managing the area.

Management Actions

When use reaches 30,000 visits per year, there will be a need to hire another Park Aide and increase the number of summer maintenance personnel by two people. When participation in the Environmental Education programs increases by 50 percent, there will be a need to hire another Environmental Specialist for the high use period.



Environmental Education (A-4)

Objective: To utilize environmental education as the primary method of developing user awareness and a sense of stewardship that will contribute to preserving the qualities of the Recreation Area.

Present Situation: The present environmental education program is based at the Visitor Center but occurs throughout the Recreation Area. Existing programs include interpretive facilities at the Visitor Center, brochures, guided hikes, school field trips, weekend guided group hikes, campfire talks, and direct contact with visitors by BLM personnel.

Management Prescription

Maintain an active environmental education program provided by an adequate staff of BLM personnel and volunteers from May through September.



Management Actions

Existing Programs will continue.

Develop a new brochure to explain the various programs offered at the Recreation Area.

A minimum program at present use levels will require an Environmental Specialist from May through September. Facilities associated with the environmental education program are addressed under the specific zones where they are located.

Expand the Environmental Education Program as needed to meet increased visitor use levels.

Prehistoric and Historic Sites (A-5)

Objective: To preserve and interpret select prehistoric and historic sites within the Recreation Area and record all others found.

Present Situation: A very small portion of the Recreation Area has been inventoried for these sites. Even this small inventory has shown there are a very large number of sites. Most obvious are numerous rock art sites and quarry sites where the raw materials for tool making were obtained.

Management Prescription

The entire Wild Rivers Recreation Area will receive a Class III inventory for cultural resources. Selected sites will be excavated or interpreted for visitors. Remaining sites will be preserved through various methods including appropriate trail and facility location, and environmental education.



Management Actions

Inventory and excavation of cultural sites will be coordinated by a BLM Archaeologist. A plan will be developed to complete inventories of the Intensive Use and River Canyon zones within five years. All zones will have inventories completed within 10 years. Inventory by volunteers and contracts will be encouraged. Sites to be interpreted will be accessed by trails which protect the site yet maximize visitor viewing. Interpretive signs for sites will be included through the annual renewal of the sign plan. A plan for managing known sites and for inventory of the area will be developed.

Wildlife (A-6)

Objective: To emphasize wildlife viewing as a principle feature of the Recreation Area.

Present Situation: The Recreation Area presently has fair to good population levels and varieties of wildlife species, which are of interest to the general public. The topography and vegetative composition allow good opportunities for people and wildlife contacts. Hunting and trapping are prohibited in the River Canyon, Intensive Use, and portions of Guadalupe and East Rim Zones.

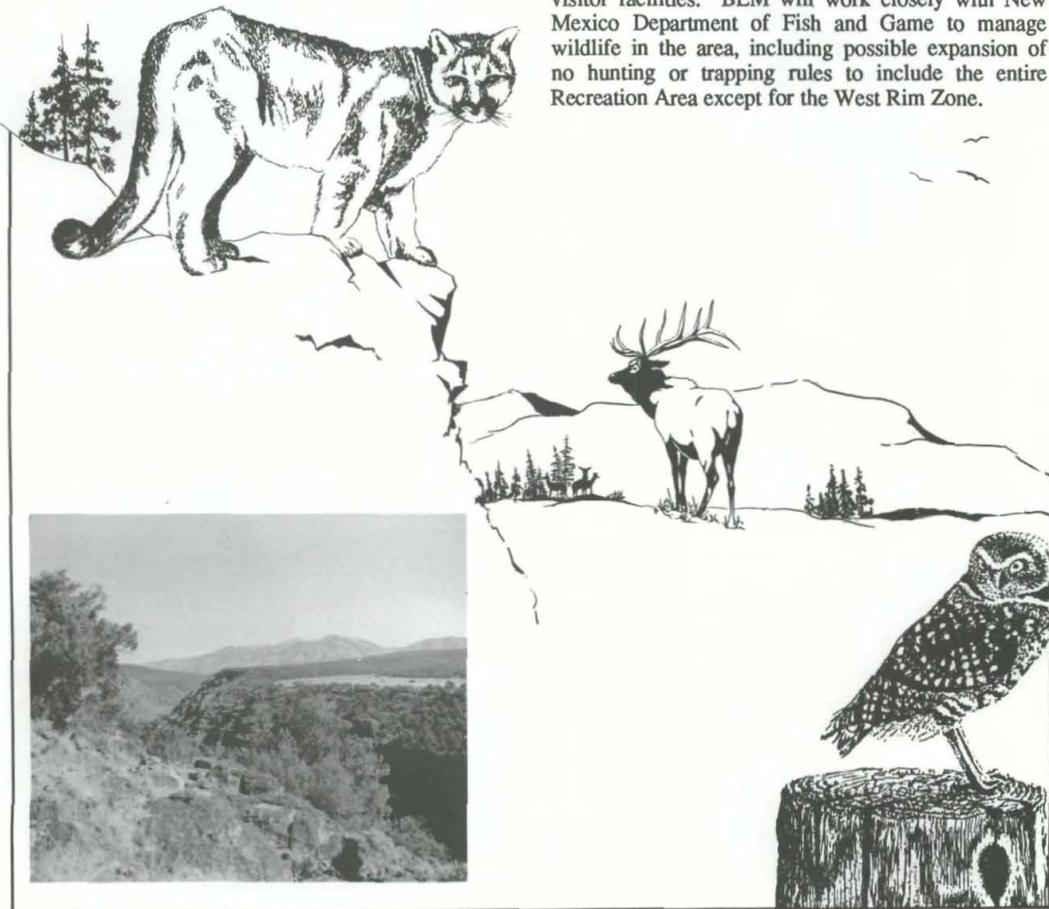
Management Prescription

Promote habitat improvement projects that will enhance the abundance and variety of wildlife in the area.

Management Actions

Develop a Habitat Management Plan within five years. Strategically locate trails, overlooks, campgrounds and roads to optimize wildlife viewing opportunities. Avoid development of recreational facilities and areas which would impair sensitive wildlife habitats.

A BLM Wildlife Biologist will participate in planning visitor facilities. BLM will work closely with New Mexico Department of Fish and Game to manage wildlife in the area, including possible expansion of no hunting or trapping rules to include the entire Recreation Area except for the West Rim Zone.



Road Conditions (A-7)

Objective: To provide and maintain a safe and efficient road network designed to meet visitor and administrative needs while considering costs and minimizing adverse visual impacts.

Present Situation: There are 13 miles of paved road and approximately five miles of dirt and gravel road. Of major concern is the primary access route which has developed large potholes posing a hazard and inconvenience to the visitors and administrative personnel. Maintenance costs to fill potholes have become a major concern. One mile of new pavement has been completed in the loop. Additional segments will be re-surfaced as funds allow. Roadway sight distances, and alignment are potentially hazardous along some sections and are safety concerns along with the potential for excessive speed. All campground and picnic area roads and parking, though graded, are dirt surfaces which deteriorate when ground is damp. All transportation routes require some level of annual maintenance.

Management Prescription

Evaluate road maintenance to determine the most cost effective way to meet objectives. Develop a multiyear funding proposal which will provide incremental upgrade through reconstruction of the access road. Enhance a loop drive for large recreational vehicles, leave the remaining road system for visitor use by smaller vehicles.

Management Actions

Resurface roads along primary access routes to a service level capable of supporting large recreational vehicles. Picnic areas and campground roads and parking areas will be graded with crowns, ditches and gravel surfacing. Parking areas will be defined and measures taken to avoid or discourage random parking outside prescribed areas. The basic road program will continue to fix potholes, regrade and ditch roads and campground and picnic areas annually as needed. Upgrades will be dependent upon available funding beyond annual maintenance.

Grounds Maintenance (A-8)

Objective: To provide clean, attractive facilities for visitor use and enjoyment.

Present Situation: Trash collection and the cleaning of facilities is done under a private contract with non-BLM personnel, with regular service during peak season and periodic service during the winter months. Facilities and areas are kept free of litter by BLM volunteers and students. As the camping and picnic units are old, many require painting and restoration. Trails require constant maintenance to keep them safe. These demands exceed present operational capability without more help from volunteers.

Management Prescription

Roads, trails, campgrounds, and day use areas on the rim and below will be kept free of trash according to a regular schedule designed to meet the demand. Vault toilets, campsites and fireplaces will be cleaned weekly or as needed. The Visitor Center will be cleaned and maintained to high standards.

Management Actions

An annual contract will be offered and issued to perform trash collection, fireplace cleaning, and toilet maintenance.

The Visitor Center will be cleaned and maintained by BLM personnel daily during the peak season and periodically during the winter months. Litter collection will be conducted as needed by BLM personnel and volunteers.

Existing facilities requiring painting and restoration work will be identified and will receive needed attention before new facilities are constructed.

Signs (A-9)

Objective: To provide sufficient visitor information and regulatory signing to meet current and future needs, while protecting scenic quality.

Present Situation: Existing signing is insufficient to meet current and future needs based on the objectives and standards established in the existing sign plan for the Recreation Area. Many existing signs need to be changed and many new signs are needed.

Management Prescription

Implement the existing sign plan. Review needs each year prior to budget cycle. Maintain signs in new to near-new condition.

Management Actions

A contract for new signs will be issued in time for installation in the spring of each year. Implement prescriptions for signing plan review, budgeting, and establishing an inventory.

Sign inventories will be maintained at levels necessary to immediately replace signs that can not be repaired to meet new to nearly-new standards.

Off Road Vehicles (ORVs) (A-10)

Objective: To prevent damage to the area's soils and vegetation by ORV's.

Present Situation: There are few examples of damage by ORVs in the Recreation Area; however, damage is increasing at certain sites. An ORV closure designation covers a portion of the area. No mountain bike use is occurring, although such use is anticipated.

Management Prescription

Vehicle use will be limited to designated roads and trails according to the Recreation Area revised designation. Mountain bike trails will be developed where their use will not conflict with other trail users.

Management Actions

Revise the present ORV designation to include all of the Recreation Area.

Install signing, fencing and place barriers. These structures will be monitored monthly during the peak season and repaired or replaced as needed. Develop a cooperative agreement with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish for coordination of law enforcement in the area.

A plan specifically for mountain bike use will be developed with user groups when demand warrants.



Water Quality (A-11)

Objective: Water quality will be maintained in accordance with New Mexico State water quality standards.

Present Situation: Water quality in wells and springs is excellent. Increased visitor use could cause deterioration of water quality, especially at springs.

Management Prescription

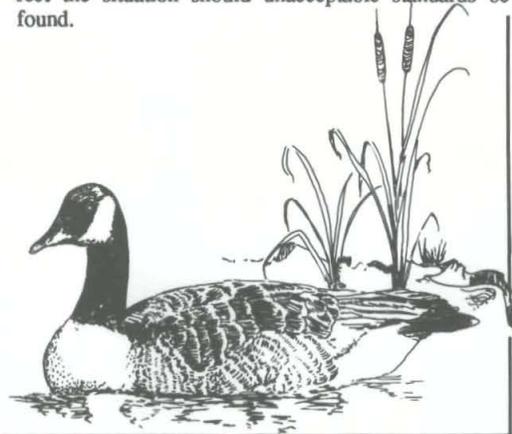
Water quality of well systems and springs will be monitored for potability under state standards.



Management Actions

Water will be sampled and tested from both well systems and Big and Little Arsenic Springs on a quarterly basis. If the springs' water is found unacceptable without treatment, warning signs will be posted to warn of the potential hazards and visitors will be directed to acceptable water sources.

The Park Manager will take immediate action to determine the source of the problem and steps to correct the situation should unacceptable standards be found.



Fire Management (A-12)

Objective: To manage both wild and prescribed fires to enhance wildlife habitat and to protect life and property.

Present Situation: There is no Fire Management Plan for the Recreation Area. This means that any wildfire will be fully and aggressively suppressed, which could cause excessive surface disturbance. In some cases, wildfire could be beneficial to wildlife habitat and even long term visual quality.

Management Prescription

Develop a Fire Management Plan for the Recreation Area.

Suppression actions should be taken and prescribed fire projects planned in accordance with a Recreation Area Fire Management Plan.

Management Actions

Develop a fire management plan within one year that describes how prescribed fires or limited suppression of wild fires could improve wildlife habitat, grazing and natural systems. The plan will identify suppression zones and clearly state that fires will be fully suppressed if they occur near campgrounds or where lives or property are endangered. Open campfires will be prohibited.

Vegetation (A-13)

Objective: To promote a natural appearing distribution and abundance of trees and vegetation in the Recreation Area.

Present Situation: The natural distribution and abundance of trees in the Recreation Area is threatened. Illegal woodcutting for home use and wood gathering by campers are causing a severe loss of trees in certain areas. In addition, regeneration of trees is not occurring in and near heavily used areas due to disturbance and soil compaction by visitors.

Management Prescription

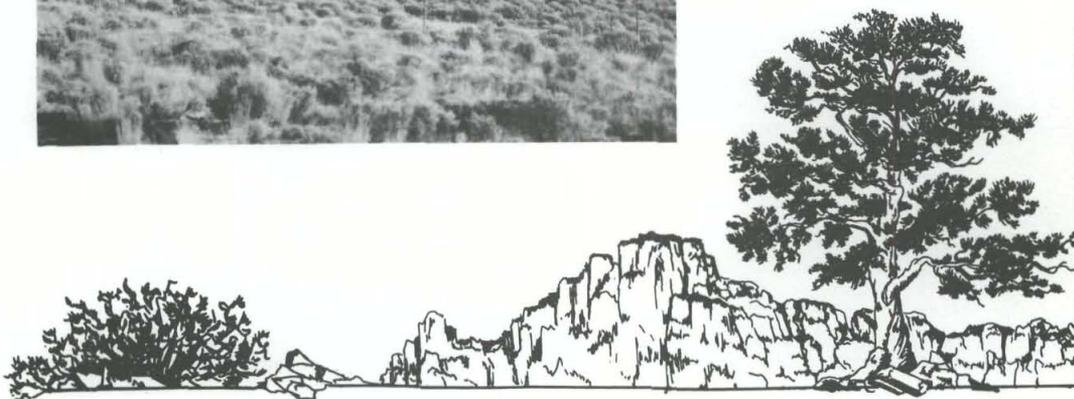
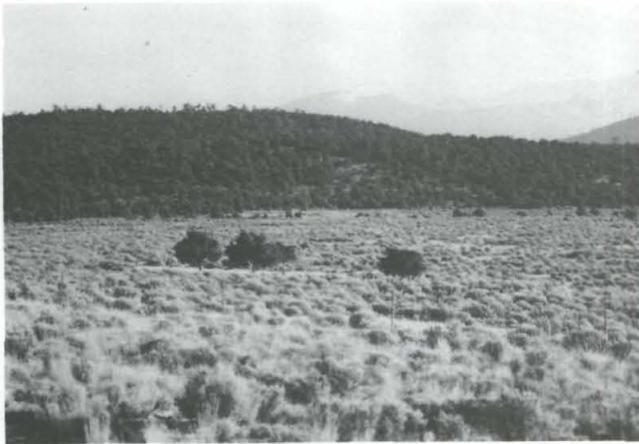
Tree cutting will only be allowed for administrative purposes such as to control fire, disease and insects and in some cases for wildlife habitat improvement and facility development. Tree planting will be conducted in areas where natural reproduction is impaired.

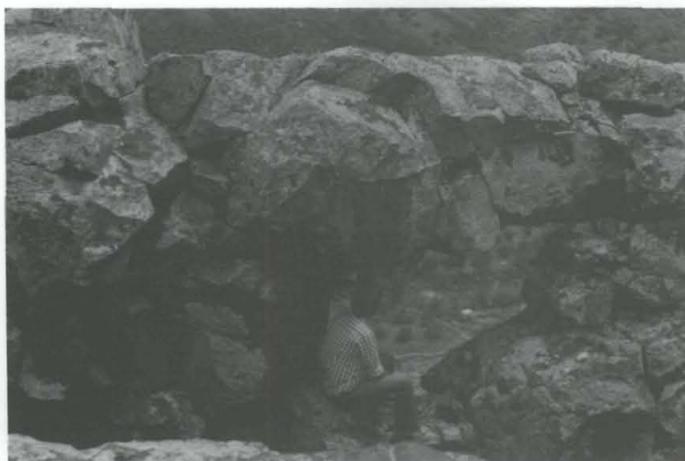
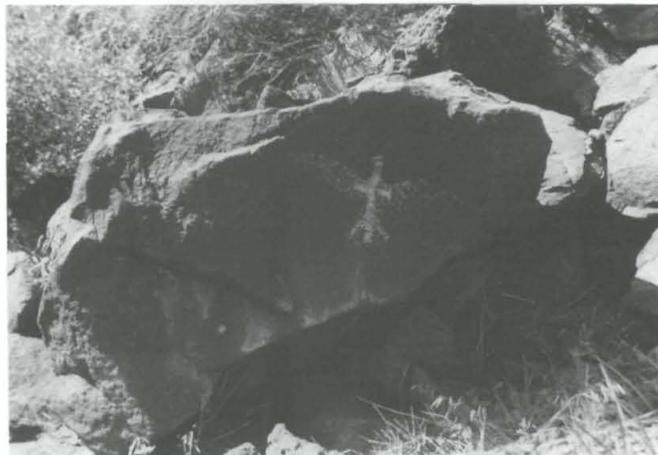
Identify a time frame for prohibiting open fires (campfires) which will help reduce the loss of vegetation for this use.

Management Actions

A reforestation plan for the Recreation Area will be developed. This plan will describe methods of planting, places to plant and time frames for completion. Signs prohibiting wood cutting will be posted in appropriate areas.

Prohibit open fires in the Recreation Area according to the Fire Management Plan.

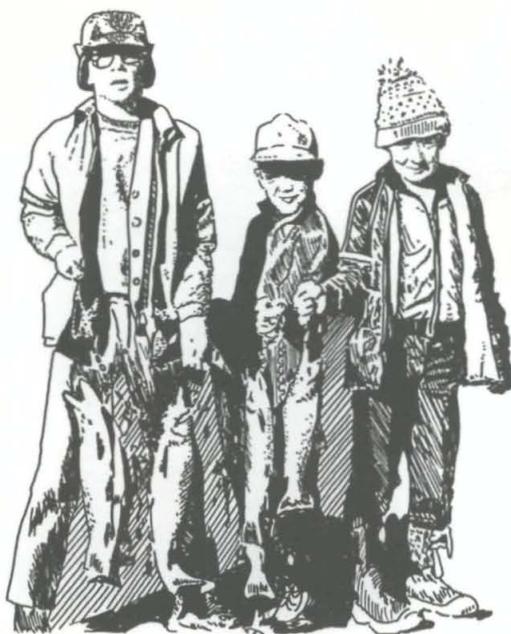
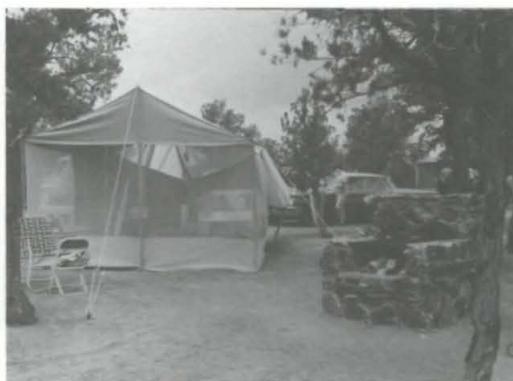


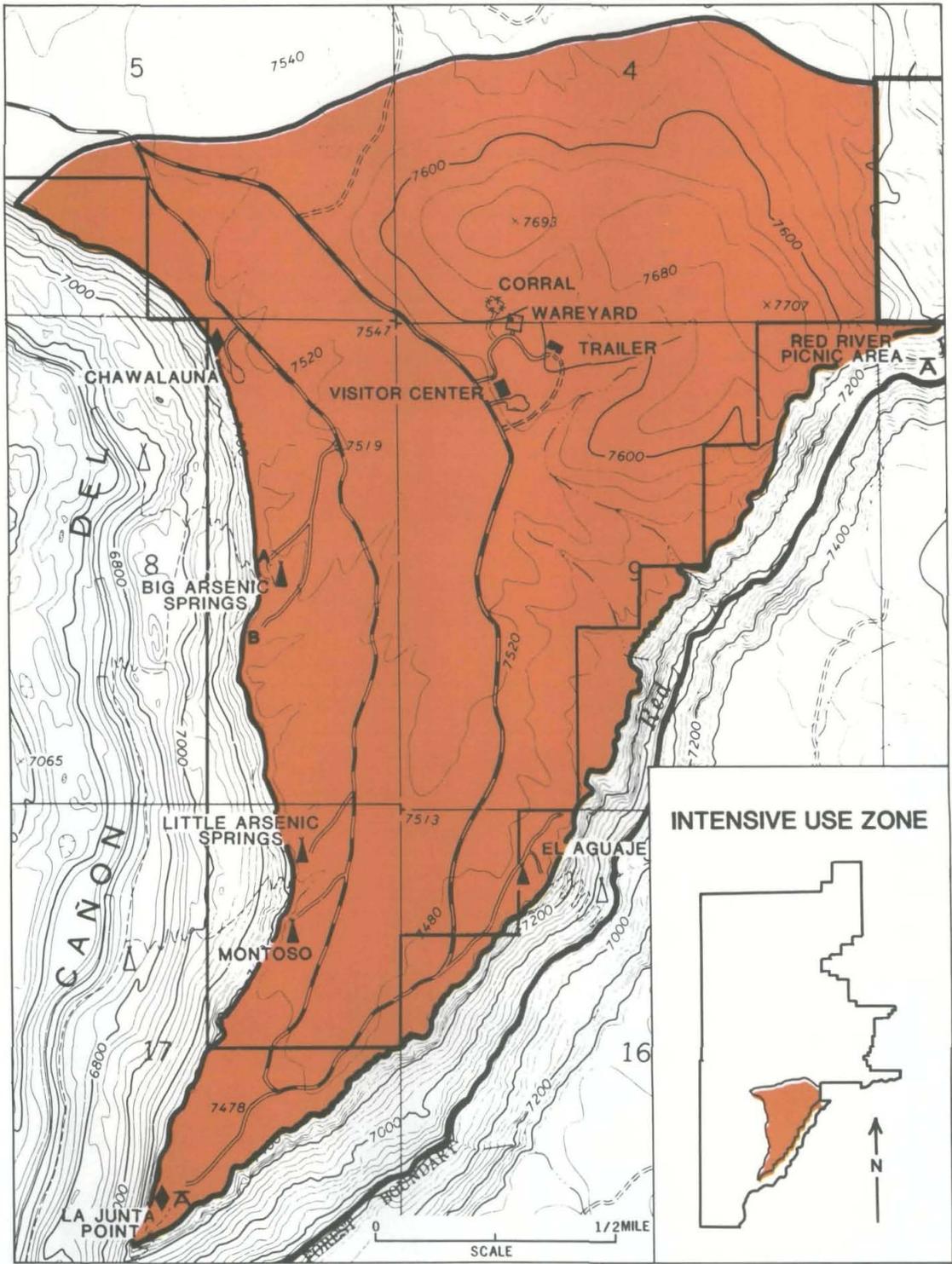


Intensive Use Zone

The Intensive Use Zone lies between the Red River and Rio Grande canyons and is the primary recreational use zone in the area. The Visitor Center, campgrounds and day use facilities are located in this zone. The road through the Recreation Area forms a loop in the Intensive Use Zone with all campgrounds and overlooks radiating from it. Piñon and juniper woodlands provide shade and wind protection to the camping areas. The center of the loop is an expanse of sagebrush and grassland.

Visitors are attracted to the canyon rims and the tremendous vistas they provide. This is a popular area for sightseeing, picnicking and camping. The Intensive Use Zone will continue as the primary visitor use zone in the Recreation Area, containing facilities to accommodate both day and overnight use. Visitor management and environmental education activities will focus on this zone.





Day Use (I-1)

Objective: To provide day use areas that will accommodate uses and use levels and reduce conflict with overnight areas.

Present Situation: Most of the visitor use in the Recreation Area is day use. This takes the form of fishing, picnicking, hiking, use of the overlooks, and touring the Visitor Center. Based on the present design, picnic areas, trailheads and overlooks often share the same facilities. When visitor attendance is low, these activities and their parking areas are not in conflict. When visitor attendance is high, there is competition for use of the individual table and shelter units. Parking is congested, and campers often occupy sites better suited for day use.

Management Prescription

Day use and camping areas will be clearly designated and marked. La Junta, Chawalauna, the Visitor Center and portions of the campgrounds will be day use areas only. Additional tables will be constructed at the Visitor Center, La Junta and Chawalauna. Facilities will be accessible to the handicapped. High use parking areas will have more organized parking arrangements developed and signed.

Management Actions

Immediately sign all day use areas. Additional picnic tables will be constructed at La Junta, Chawalauna, and the Visitor Center. Design and construct organized parking facilities at all sites in response to the type of activity and prescribed carrying capacity of the area. Establish carrying capacities for day use activities for each site. Develop a visitor-monitoring program which records attendance and frequency of use. Review natural carrying capacity of areas remaining within the zone. Determine suitability for future expansion. Also, consider new sites to serve as group picnic areas should the demand materialize.

Remove tables and shelters from the immediate vicinity of the rim to allow this area to be used in common by all visitors.

Rim Trails (I-2)

Objective: To provide hiking opportunities for those who do not wish to, or are unable to descend the canyons and to link certain facilities to one another.

Present Situation: No trails exist on the rim. Visitors wanting to hike without descending the canyon are hiking cross-country. Many visitors who do descend into the canyon, hike down one trail and up another. Once they return to the rim, they also must hike cross-country to their cars.

Management Prescription

Design and develop a trail network which links certain facilities to each other. The trail alignment will have a corridor standard which will maintain the integrity of the trail experience. This may necessitate relocation of some facilities within this corridor.

Management Actions

Initiate in 1988 a trail network plan which will layout priorities for completion of segments. Construction of the trail will be completed as funding and volunteers are available.

The plan will include an interpretive loop trail from the Visitor Center. This trail will begin at the Visitor Center, proceed to the Red River Canyon Rim, then return to the Visitor Center. An Interpretive trail will continue to be provided at La Junta.

Visitor Center (I-3)

Objective: To provide and maintain a Visitor Center that can accommodate all identified uses, including informing the public, providing basic visitor services, and serving as the administrative headquarters for the Recreation Area. The Visitor Center will be named in memory of Arthur W. Zimmerman.

Present Situation: The Visitor Center continues to serve as the focal point for providing interpretation, basic visitor services, and as a BLM Administrative Site. The Visitor Center needs remodeling to better accommodate visitors, and needs a new roof. It is open seven days a week from Memorial Day to Labor Day each year.

Management Prescription

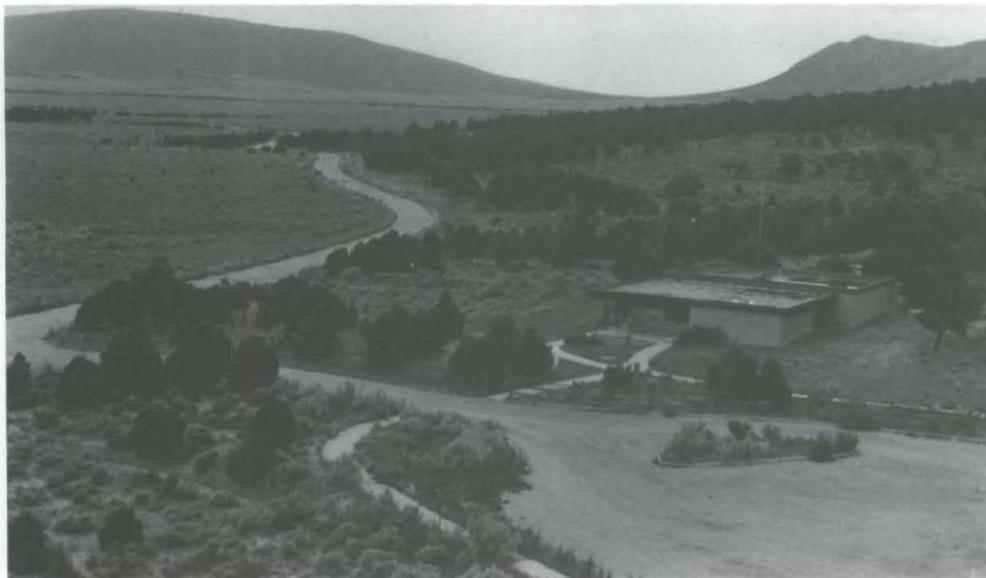
The Visitor Center building will be safe, well maintained and suitable for intended uses. If the building cannot be maintained in a suitable condition, it will be closed to public use.

Management Actions

Bring the existing building up to acceptable maintenance standards. Use the building as it is until remodeling needs are discussed and designed.

Name the Visitor Center as a memorial to Arthur W. Zimmerman.

Open the Visitor Center during the "off season" weekends that receive more than 20 vehicles per day. Present use trends indicate that with this criteria, the Visitor Center will be opened during October weekends in the near future.



Interpretive Displays (I-4)

Objective: To have current, accurate, informative and visually appealing interpretive displays at the Visitor Center.

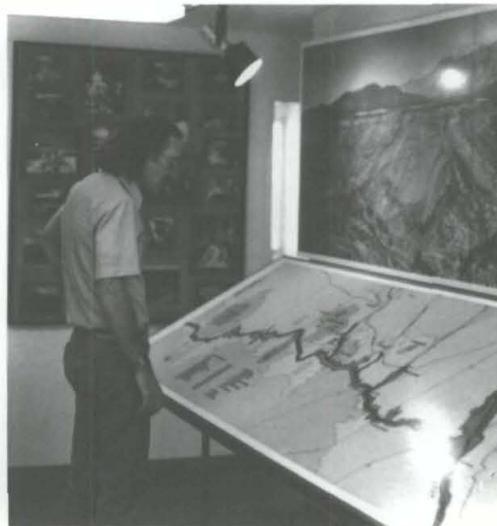
Present Situation: The existing displays are outdated, incorrect and deteriorating from age.

Management Prescription

Provide new interpretive display panels and a new video tape at the Visitor Center for visitor orientation.

Management Actions

New interpretive display panels will be purchased and installed at the Visitor Center. A new video program will be developed to provide pertinent information about the Recreation Area.



Amphitheater (I-5)

Objective: To provide an outdoor lecture area and facility for quality campfire programs for both campers and local residents.

Present Situation: The campfire programs occur every Saturday evening from the end of May through September. Most of these are heavily attended and the present facility has inadequate seating and slide projection arrangements.

Management Prescription

Provide expanded seating at the Amphitheater. Continue to provide high quality campfire programs through the summer season.

Management Actions

The capacity of the amphitheater will be immediately enlarged to seat 50. Increasing the facility to accommodate 100 people will occur as needed.

Campgrounds (I-6)

Objective: To meet user demand with the minimum number of well designed campgrounds and campsites accommodating both motorized and non-motorized access.

Present Situation: All the developed facilities with a picnic table, shelter and fireplace are used as campsites. Camping opportunities vary from motorized access sites on the rim to hike-in sites in the River Canyon. The rim sites are poorly designed for the motorized use they are now receiving. Intensely used areas lack natural forbs and grasses, and soil erosion is occurring. Some campsites were located on the rim in the best view locations. These sites are better suited for use by all campers and hikers in the area rather than being occupied by one party. Campground density and natural carrying capacity required to achieve the desired recreational experience will require a detailed site analysis. Future locations and a broader spectrum of camping experiences is needed to accommodate a wider range of recreationists.

Management Prescription

Make maximum use of existing facilities, including redesign where necessary, before adding new facilities.

Keep total number of campgrounds, campsites, and related facilities to the minimum necessary to meet user demand. Never exceed allowable visitor carrying capacity in concentrated use areas.

All new facilities must blend with surroundings.

A threshold of 80 percent occupancy of sites during July and August will be used to identify the point at which BLM will need to implement additional management prescriptions pertaining to visitor use of campgrounds.

The immediate vicinity of the rim should be managed so that it is available to all campers to walk and view the scenery. No camping facilities will be placed in this area.

Provide for a variety of campers, including those using backpacks, tents, cars or recreational vehicles.

Management Actions

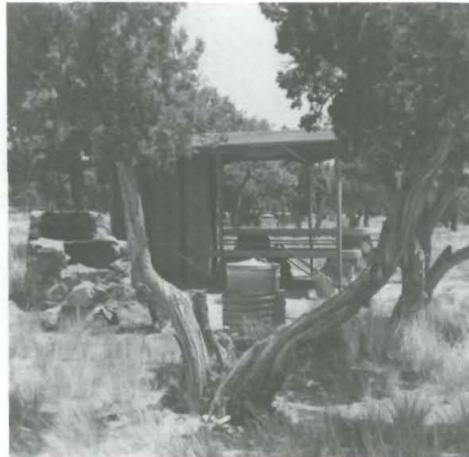
Redesign existing facilities by September, 1988 or as soon as funding allows.

Prepare expansion and redesign of campgrounds by September, 1988 or as soon as funding allows.

Remove existing camping facilities from the immediate vicinity of the rim to ensure free access by all visitors.

Construction of "Rio Colorado" campground will be initiated when the expanded campgrounds have consistently reached 80 percent capacity during the high use months.

Tables and shelters now located on the rim will be relocated off the rim in the same general area, creating new campsites in existing campgrounds. The area in the immediate vicinity of the rim will be a no camping area. Signs and barriers will be installed to implement this action.



Overflow Camping Area (I-7)

Objective: To provide an additional location for visitors to stay when campgrounds are full or as a temporary solution until new campground facilities can be constructed.

Present Situation: Camping use is projected to increase in the next five years and there will be periods during the high use season when existing campgrounds are full.

Management Prescription

An area for overflow camping use will be designed and developed for use when existing campgrounds are full.

Management Actions

The overflow campground will be planned for development when existing campgrounds have reached full capacity for five or more days during any 30-day period. The overflow camping area will be constructed when existing campgrounds reach full capacity for seven or more days in a 30-day period. The overflow campground will be located near the Visitor Center rather than near the canyons.

Group Camping (I-8)

Objective: To provide a place in the Recreation Area for group camping.

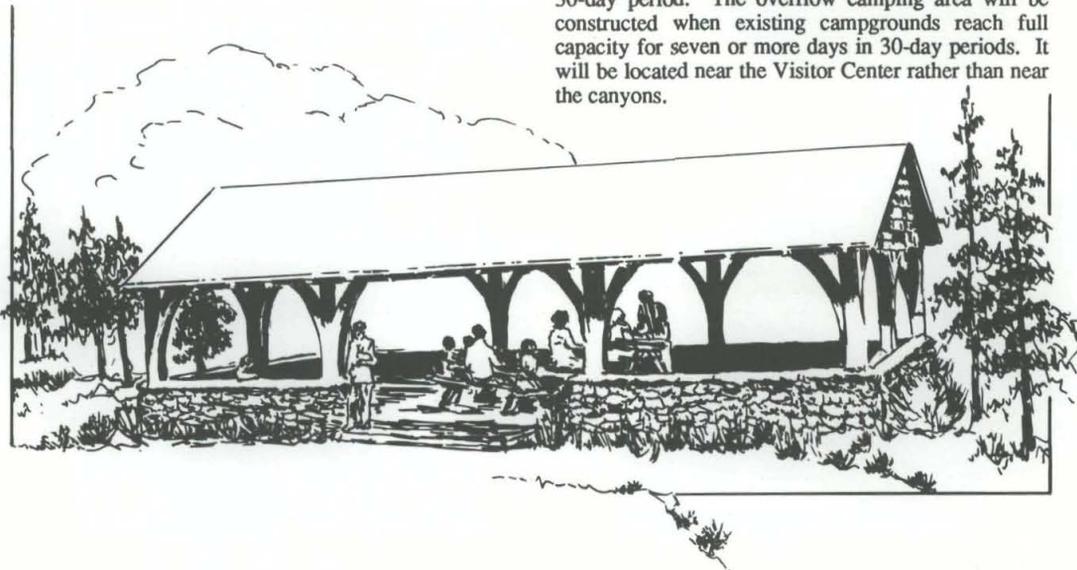
Present Situation: Camping use is projected to increase in the next five years and there will be periods during the high use season when existing campgrounds are full.

Management Prescription

An area for overflow camping use will be designed and developed for use when existing campgrounds are full.

Management Actions

The overflow campground will be planned for development when existing campgrounds have reached full capacity for five or more days during any 30-day period. The overflow camping area will be constructed when existing campgrounds reach full capacity for seven or more days in 30-day periods. It will be located near the Visitor Center rather than near the canyons.



Recreational Vehicles (RVs) (I-9)

Objective: To have a place to accommodate large RVs.

Present Situation: There are very few campsites which can accommodate large RVs. Present facilities were not designed for such use.

Management Prescription

Provide for limited RV camping at El Aguaje campground. When El Aguaje is full, direct RVs to LaJunta or Chawalauna day use areas for temporary overnight camping until the overflow camping area is completed.

Consider RVs in design of overflow camping area.

Future development designs would consider use by RV's.

Management Actions

RV accommodations will be clearly stated in the Recreation Area brochure, and at the entrance station and Visitor Center information boards. Implement maintenance necessary to allow RVs at El Aguaje Campground. When El Aguaje reaches capacity during 60 percent of the high use period, design and development of additional RV facilities will occur north of the Visitor Center and wareyard.

Wildlife (I-10)

Objective: To enhance opportunities for the public to observe wildlife in the area.

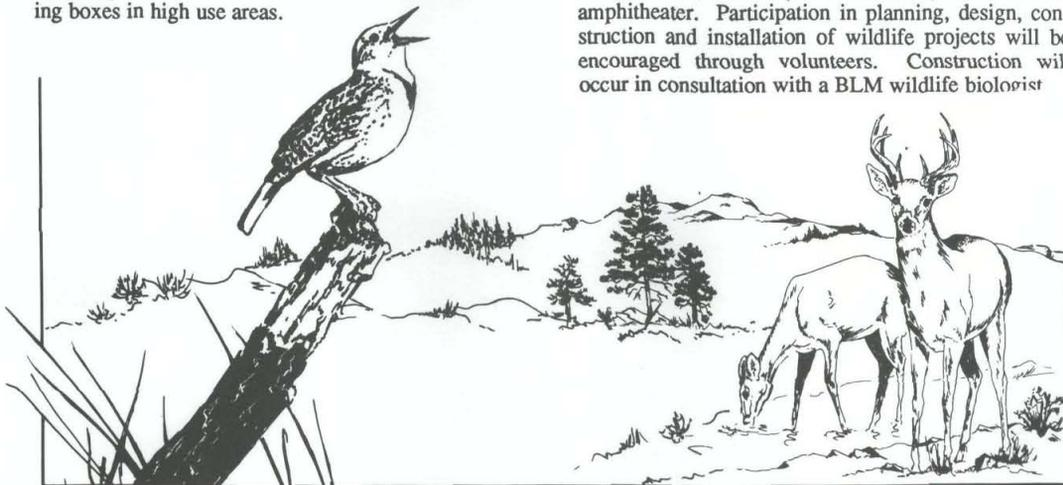
Present Situation: There is presently an abundance of wildlife in the Recreation Area, particularly associated with the canyons. Observing hawks, eagles, and other birds of prey provide many visitors with hours of enjoyment. Deer, coyotes and smaller mammals are commonly sighted near campgrounds.

Management Prescription

Facility development in this area will carefully consider impacts to wildlife. Locate bird baths and nesting boxes in high use areas.

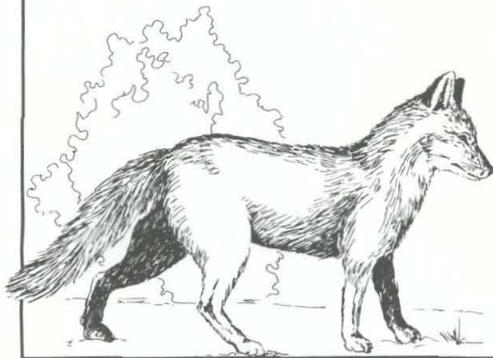
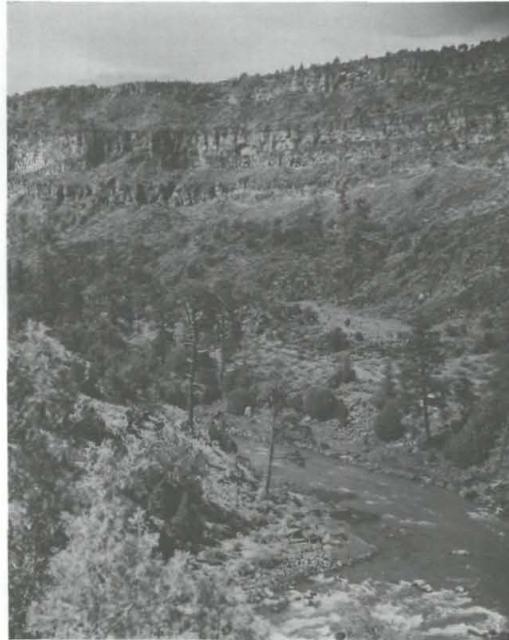
Management Actions

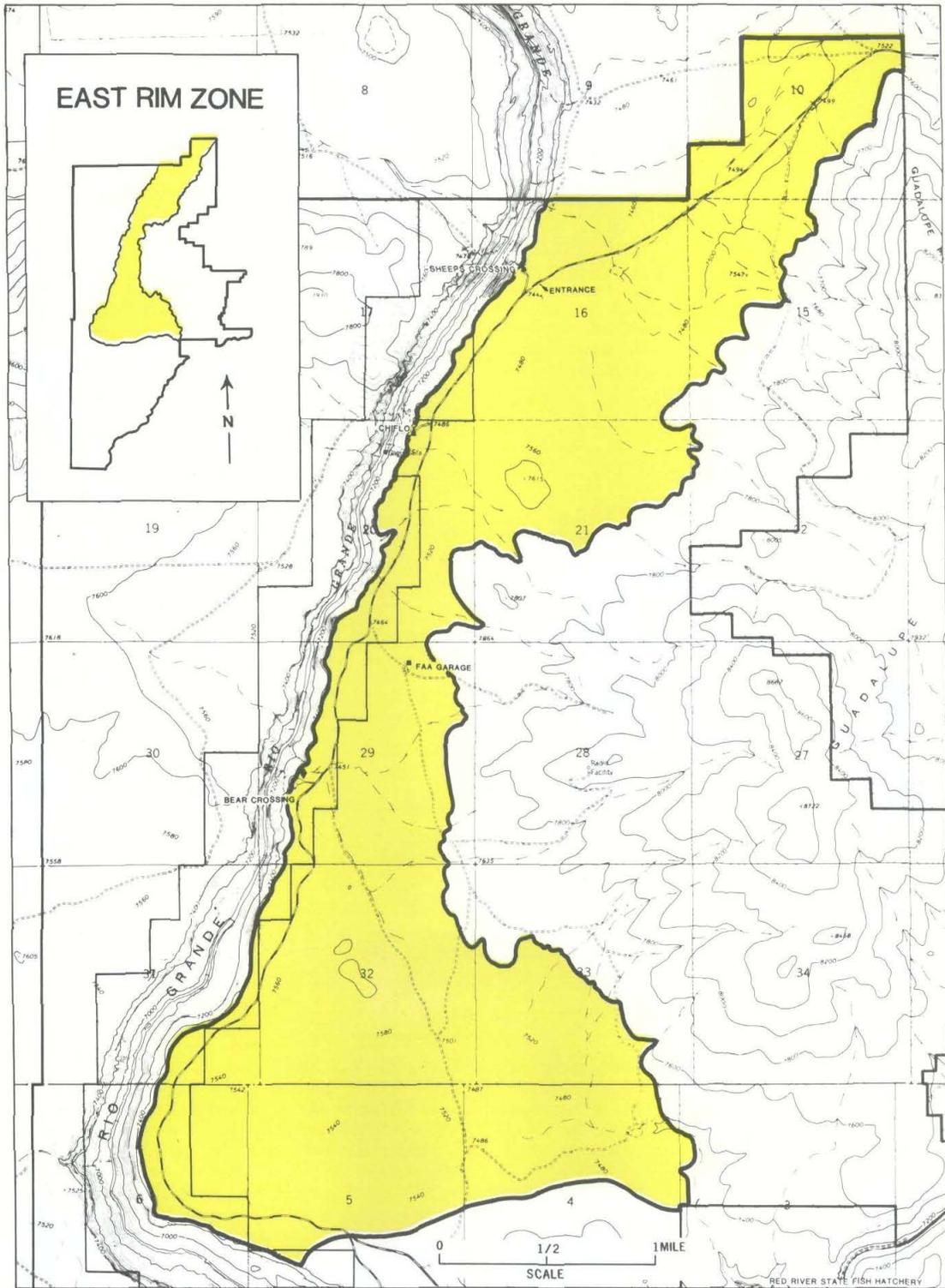
Bird nesting boxes and bird baths will be placed in campgrounds, at the Visitor Center, day use areas and amphitheater. Participation in planning, design, construction and installation of wildlife projects will be encouraged through volunteers. Construction will occur in consultation with a BLM wildlife biologist.



East Rim Zone

The East Rim Zone includes the entrance to the Wild Rivers Recreation Area and the road access to the Intensive Use Zone. This area has highly scenic overlooks, abundant wildlife, day use facilities, and provides access to the Rio Grande River Canyon.





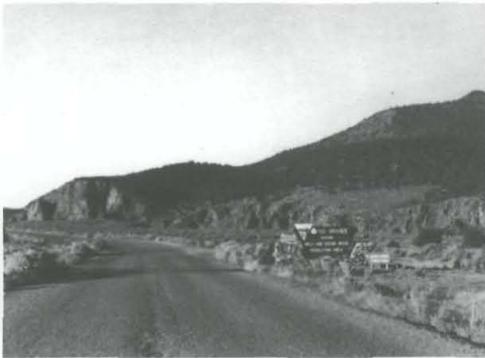
Entrance Station (E-1)

Objective: To provide visitors with initial orientation to the area.

Present Situation: New visitors to the area are often confused as to where to go and what to do. The Visitor Center is several miles from the area's entrance as are the campgrounds.

Management Prescription

The entrance area should be designed to provide the entering visitor with full information and directions for use of the area, and should provide adequate parking space so visitors can park and check maps, and seek any assistance they may need.



Management Actions

The entrance to the Wild River Recreation Area will be moved north of Sheeps Crossing where a turnout will be designed and constructed with an information board. The present entrance sign will be removed. The station will be included in the maintenance contract during the high use season and will be periodically patrolled. A small building will also be provided at the entrance for use by BLM employees as a contact point with visitors.



Day Use (E-2)

Objective: To provide efficient trailhead facilities.

Present Situation: Overnight and day use occur at Chiflo and Sheeps Crossing. Neither are presently used to capacity. Bear Crossing is an overlook and trail head only.

Management Prescription

Chiflo, Sheeps Crossing and Bear Crossing will be day use areas. Capacities for Chiflo and Sheeps Crossing will not exceed three sites per acre. The number of people using a site should not exceed 20. Bear Crossing will remain an overlook with minimal facilities.

Management Actions

During the high use period, Sheeps Crossing and Chiflo will be monitored daily for number of sites filled. When an area has reached its capacity, visitors will be directed to less crowded areas. Additional picnic tables at Sheeps Crossing and Chiflo will be designed and developed when the two areas have reached capacity during 50 percent of the high use period and there is no alternative for visitors in the Intensive Use Zone. The development of a new picnic area at Bear Crossing will also be considered at that time.

Wildlife (E-3)

Objective: To promote habitat conditions for the reintroduction of select wildlife species which will result in enhanced wildlife viewing opportunities.

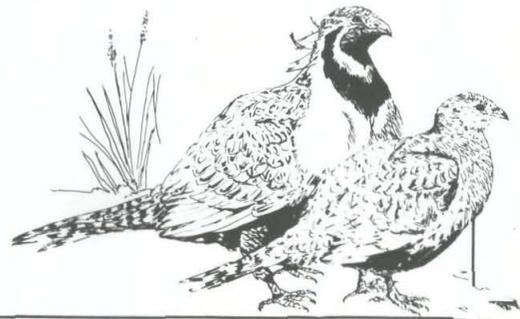
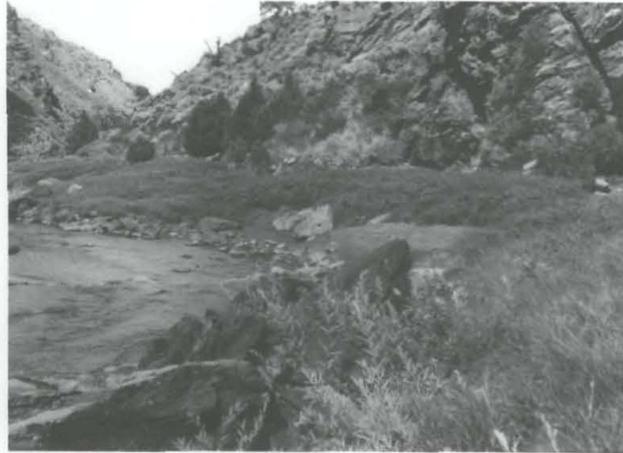
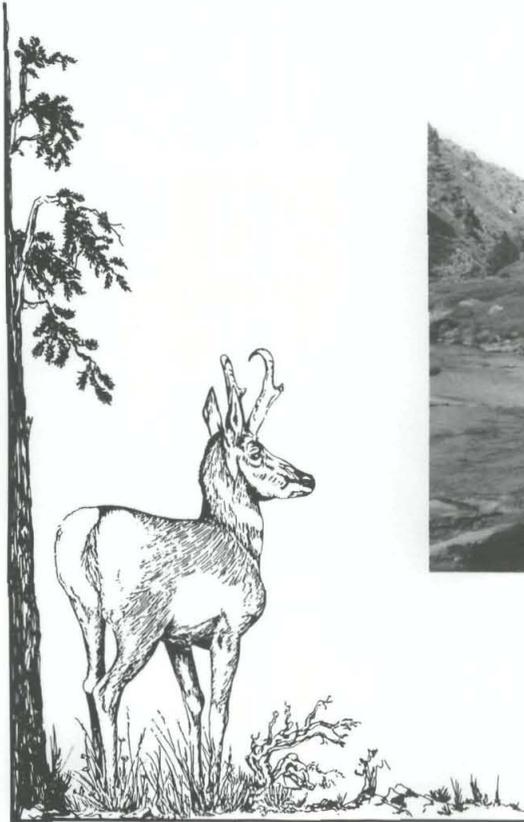
Present Situation: This zone contains abundant wildlife. Deer, coyote, and other mammals are commonly sighted. Pronghorn and sagegrouse once inhabited the area but have been driven out by a variety of factors.

Management Prescription

Reintroduction of pronghorn and sagegrouse would enhance wildlife viewing opportunities in the East Rim Zone and also in the Intensive Use Zone. Habitat improvement for sagegrouse will be needed in order for sagegrouse to survive.

Management Actions

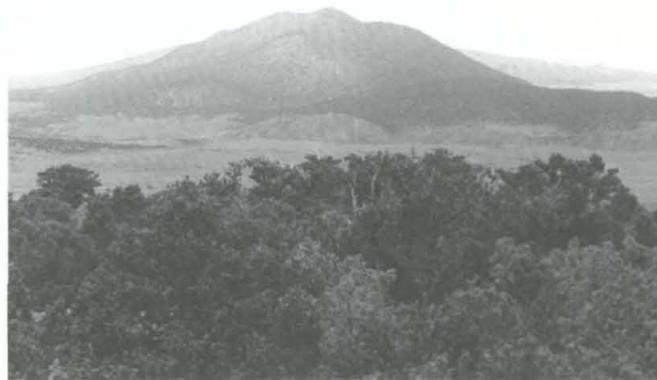
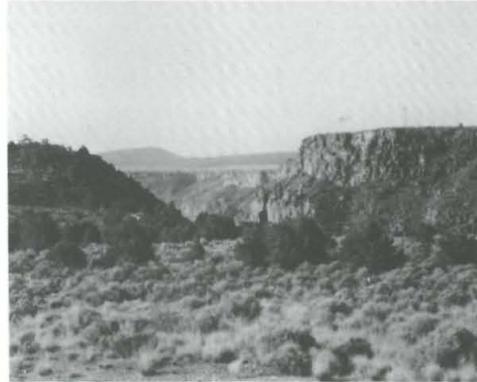
BLM will contact the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish to discuss reintroduction of both species. Implementation is dependent upon the Department of Game and Fish. Fencing may be needed to keep pronghorn in the area. A "wetland" habitat will be necessary for sagegrouse. This type of habitat may be created by attaching a drip irrigation system to an existing well. A Habitat Management Plan will be developed.

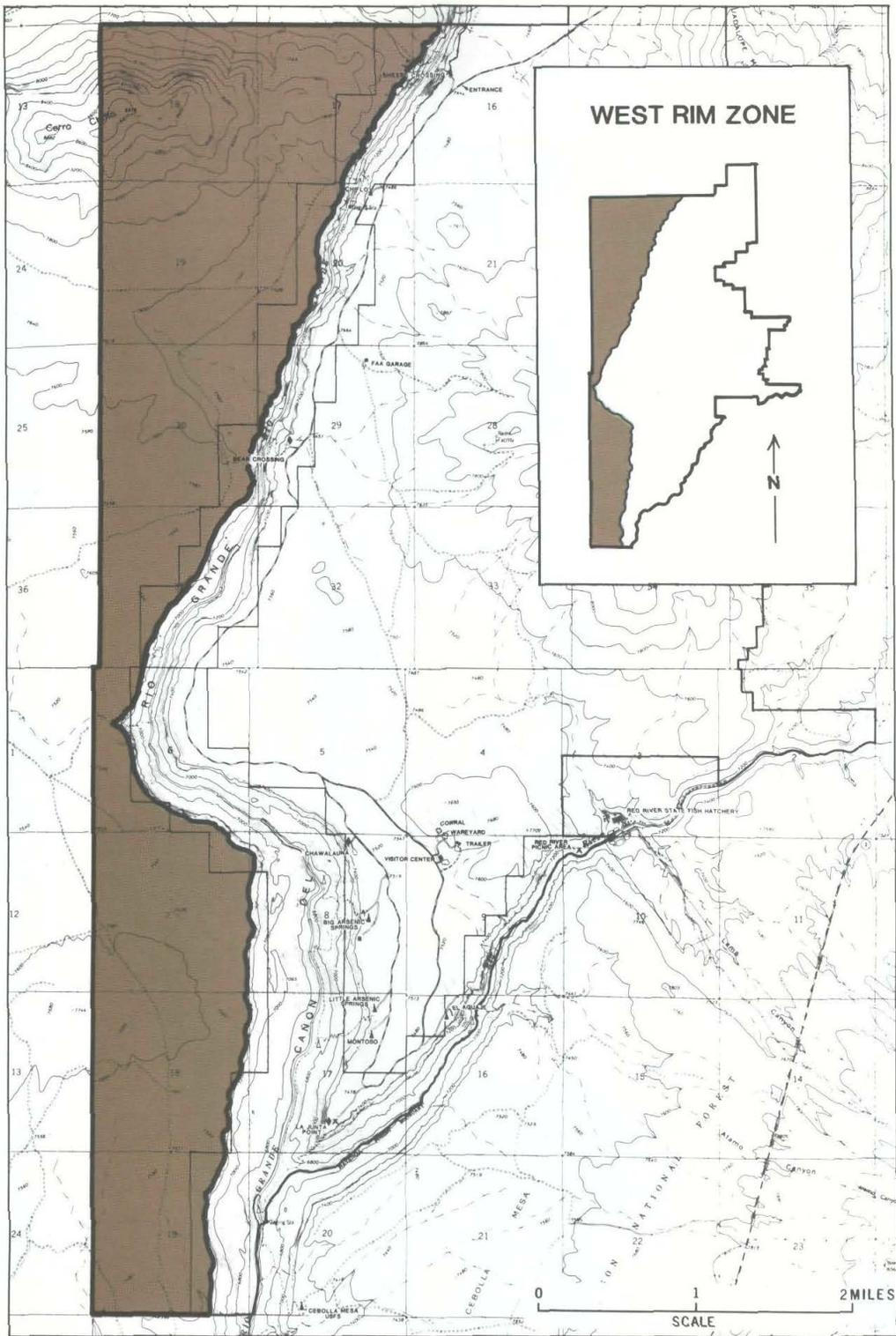


West Rim Zone

The West Rim Zone is the area on the west rim of the Rio Grande Gorge. This area provides an important scenic background to the Recreation Area. Cerro Chiflo is the principal land feature visible to visitors as they enter the Recreation Area.

This zone will be managed for multiple uses, but management practices will be limited to those which are not generally visible from other zones in the Recreation Area.





Future Use and Development (W-1)

Objective: To design and implement a plan that will facilitate the long range use of this area for low levels of primitive camping and hiking when use level warrants.

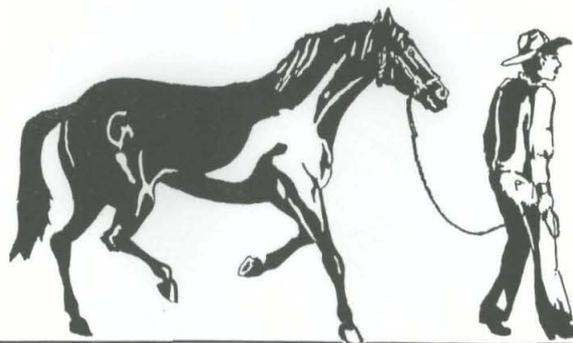
Present Situation: The West Rim Zone presently receives almost no recreational use except for occasional hunting. Grazing is allowed to the canyon rim.

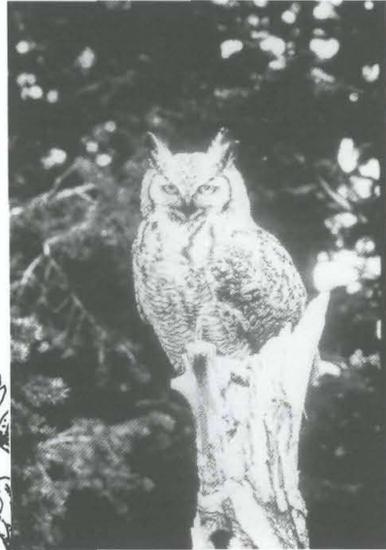
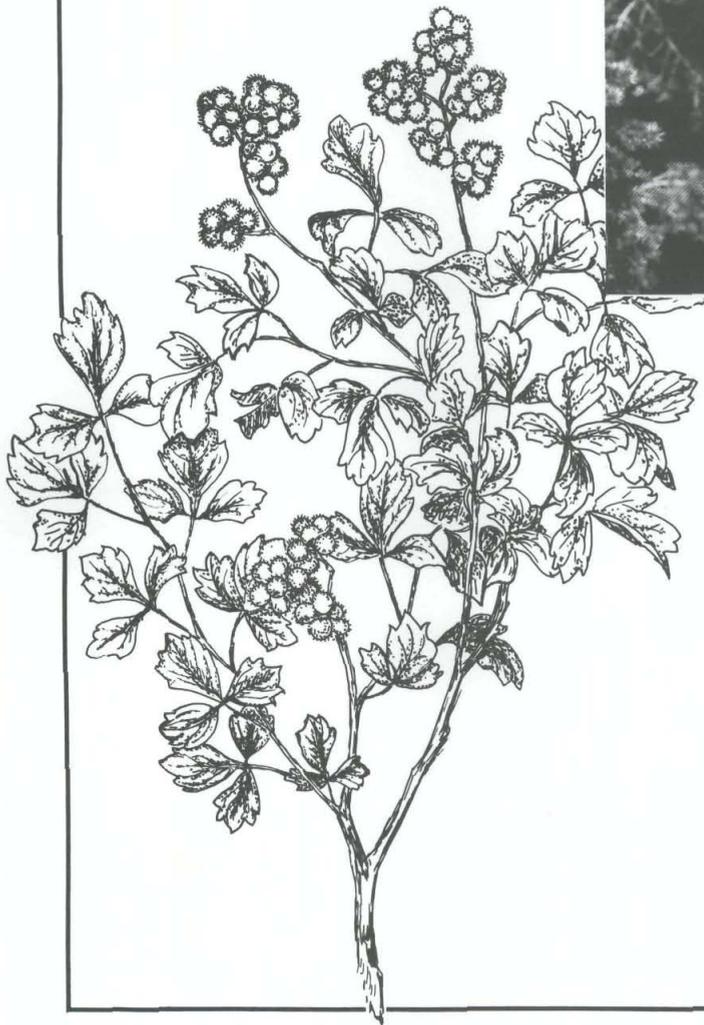
Management Prescription

Revise the management plan to include actions for the West Rim Zone when use on the east side of the River Canyon Zone reaches saturation.

Management Actions

Update the Wild Rivers Recreation Area Management plan to include actions for the West Rim Zone when use levels warrant. Use of the West Rim Zone will increase dramatically when a foot bridge is constructed across the Rio Grande. This bridge is proposed in the trails portion of the River Canyon Zone. (See R-3)

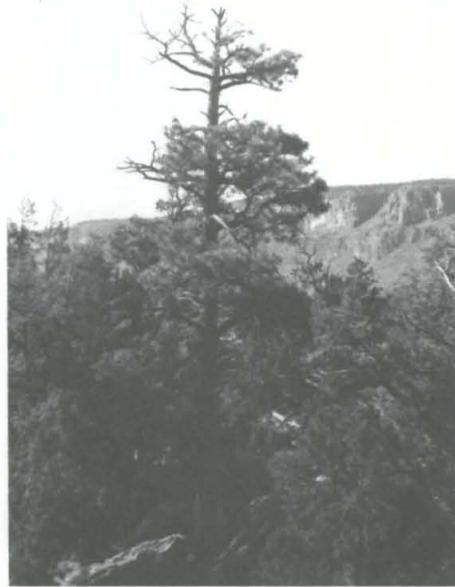
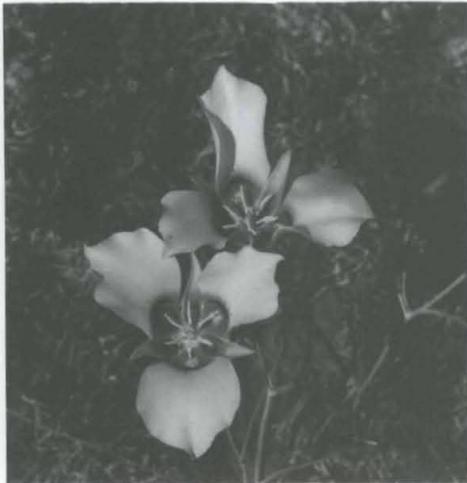


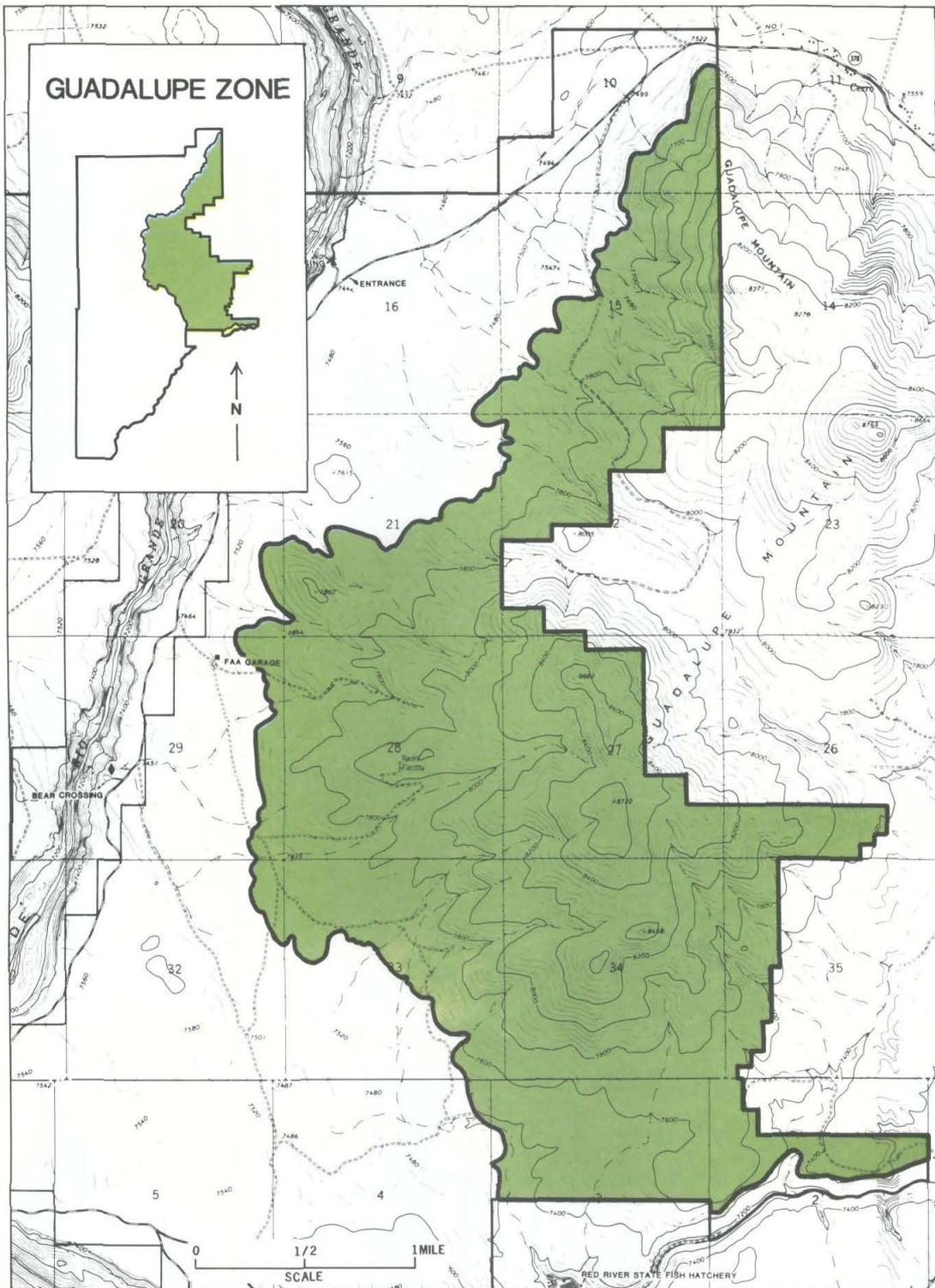


Guadalupe Zone

The Guadalupe Zone includes most of the Guadalupe Mountains. This more rugged area provides critical wildlife habitat, important archaeological sites and a scenic view of the surrounding area.

This zone will be managed as a low use zone for both motorized and non-motorized back country camping and for wildlife viewing.





Future Use and Development (G-1)

Objective: To design and implement a plan that will facilitate the long range use of this area for low levels of primitive camping and hiking when use levels warrant.

Present Situation: The West Rim Zone presently receives almost no recreational use except for occasional hunting. Grazing is allowed to the canyon rim.

Managment Prescription

Revise the management plan to include actions for the West Rim Zone when use on the east side of the River Canyon Zone reaches saturation.

Management Actions

Update the Wild Rivers Recreation Area Management plan to include actions for the West Rim Zone when use levels warrant. Use of the West Rim Zone will increase dramatically when a foot bridge is constructed across the Rio Grande. (This bridge is proposed in the trails portion of the River Canyon Zone-See R-3).

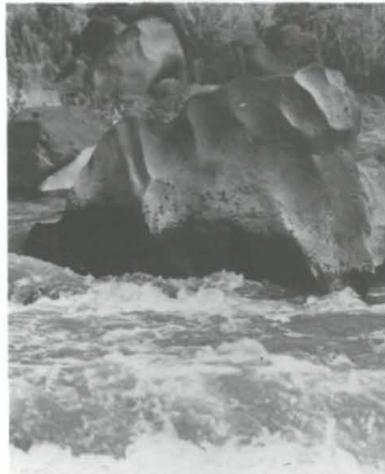
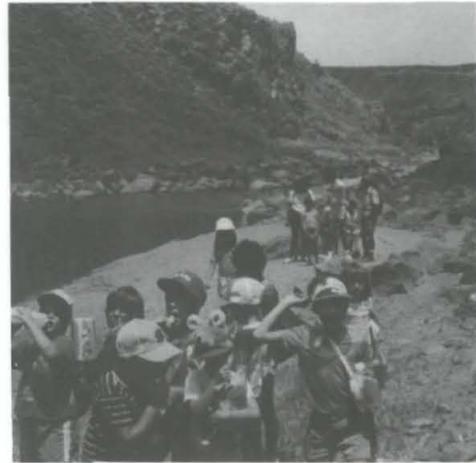


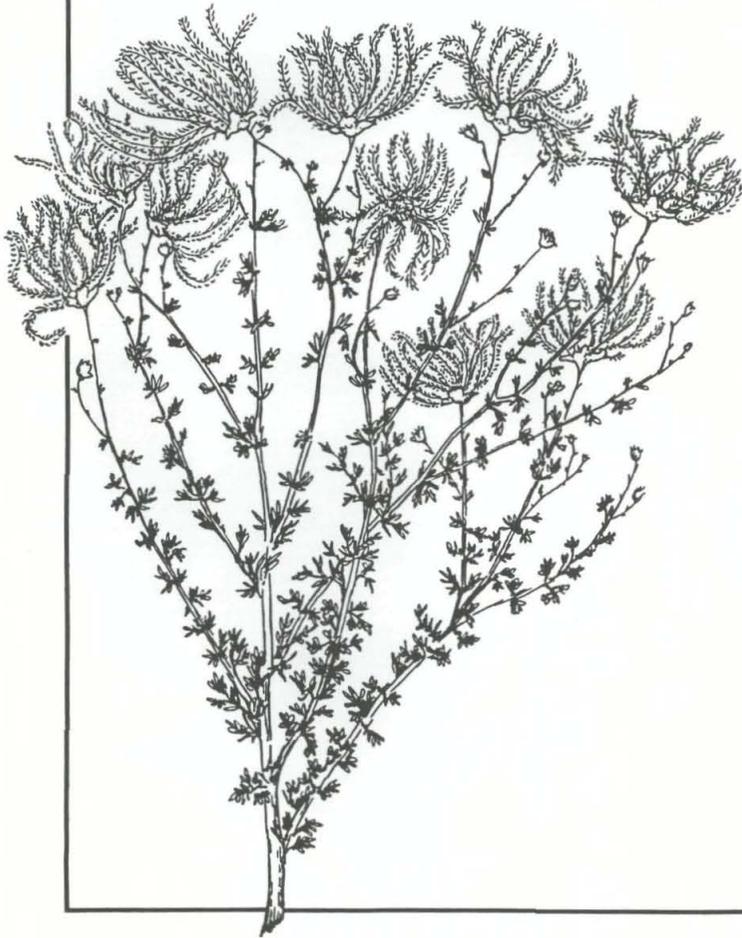
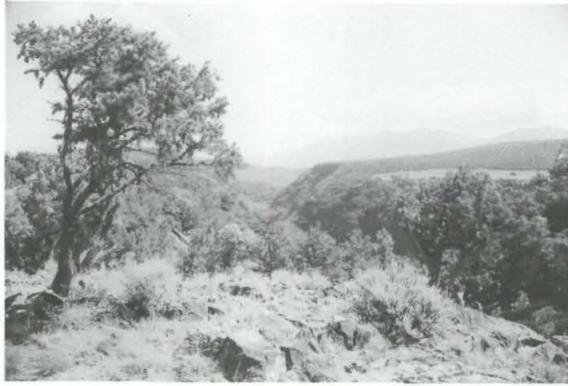
River Canyon Zone

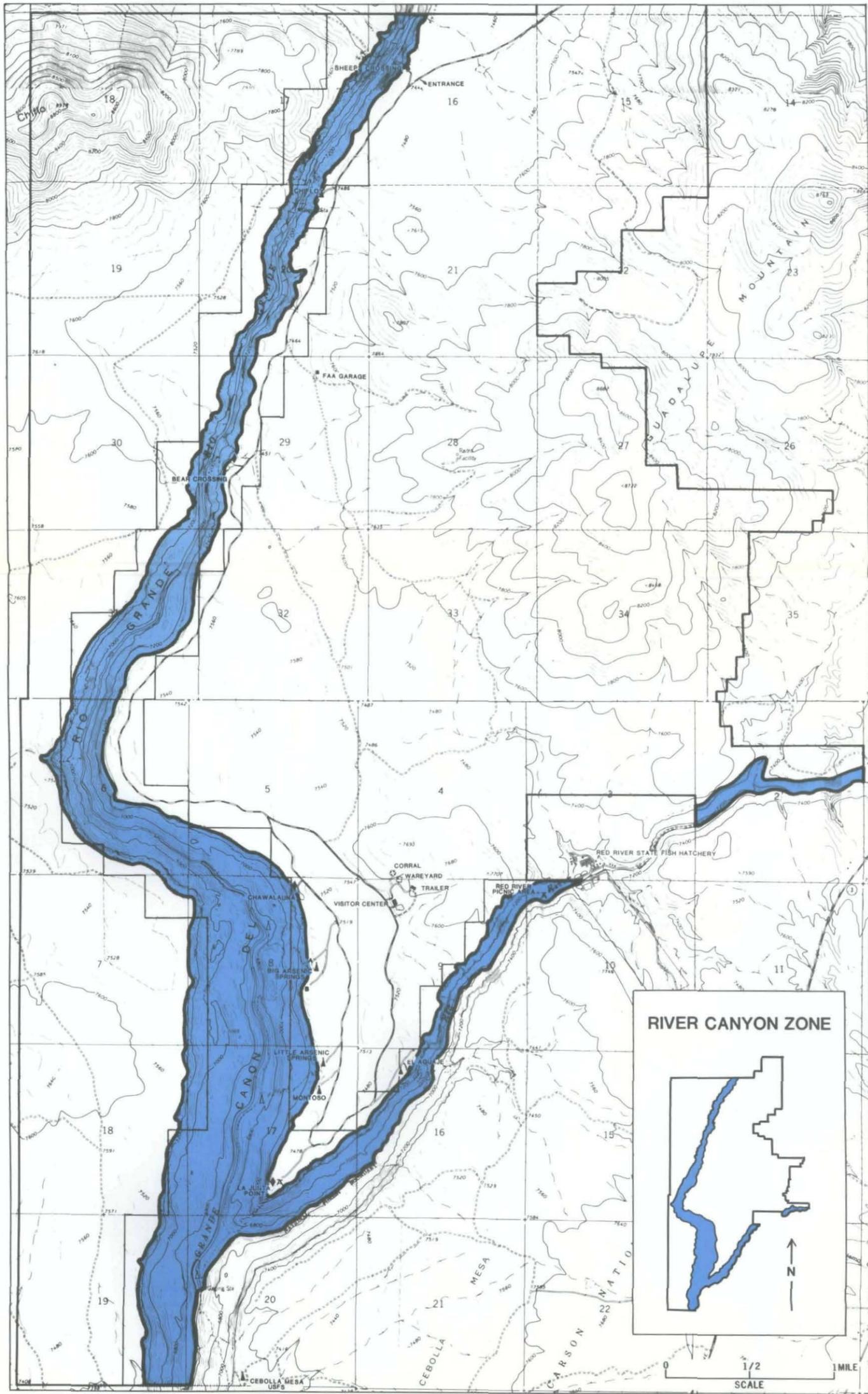
The River Canyon Zone is separated from the other zones by topography and includes sections of both the Rio Grande and the Red River. It is a unique vegetative ecosystem due to increased water availability and narrow canyons which limit sunlight. Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir are found by the rivers, along shaded canyon slopes and on terraces where rain water is retained.

Visitors come to the Wild Rivers Recreation Area to view and sometimes hike in the two river canyons. Springs at Chiflo, Big Arsenic and Little Arsenic provide fresh groundwater to thirsty hikers and afford cool places to rest. The area near the springs also provide important habitat for a variety of wildlife species. The River Canyon Zone is an important oasis in this area.

This zone will be managed to preserve the scenic quality of Canyons and their ecosystems and wildlife. Visitor use will be allowed to the extent that it does not harm these important values.







Camping (R-1)

Objective: To provide an adequate number of primitive campsites for river canyon visitors without compromising the solitude of the area.

Present Situation: There are 15 developed campsites in the river canyons. Each contains a picnic table, shelter and fireplace. Toilets are also installed near these sites. Visitors easily find isolation and solitude from other people.

Management Prescription

Campsites in the canyons should not exceed two per acre and the number of people per site should not exceed eight. Use levels and impacts to existing sites will be closely monitored, and new sites will be created as needed. No new shelters will be constructed.

Management Actions

River canyon campsites will be regularly monitored to determine the extent of use and associated impacts. This will initially occur each weekend. When these sites are full for 25 percent of the weekends, new sites will be designed and constructed. A reservation system will eventually be required.

Red River Picnic Area (R-2)

Objective: To provide a clean attractive picnic area near the Red River Fish Hatchery.

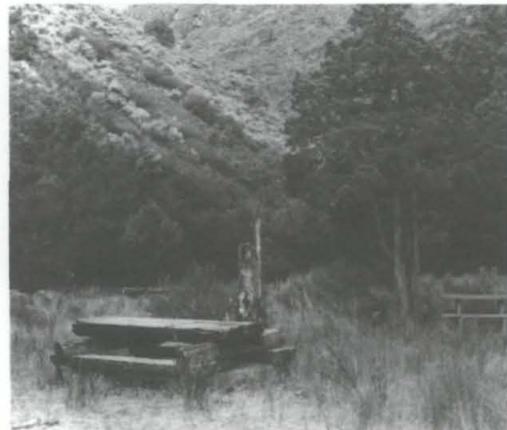
Present Situation: Visitor use at the newly renovated Red River Hatchery has increased significantly. This has, in turn, caused a significant increase in use of the adjoining BLM picnic area.

Management Prescription

A clean and attractive picnic area and toilet facilities will be provided and maintained for visitors on the Red River near the Fish Hatchery.

Management Actions

Toilets and some picnic tables will be replaced. The new toilets will be designed to accommodate wheelchairs. New picnic tables will be made of stone and concrete with one designed for wheelchair access. Management of this site will be closely coordinated with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish who operate the Hatchery.



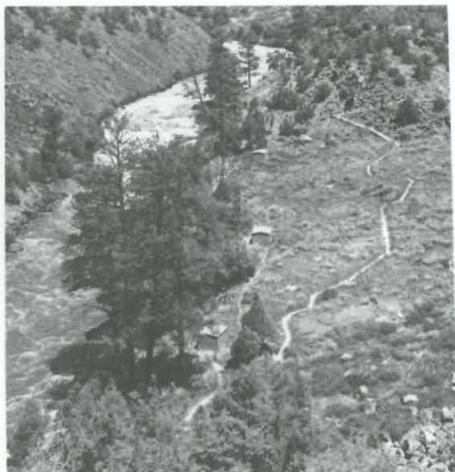
Trails (R-3)

Objective: To provide a trail system along the rivers which disperses use, provides access to many portions of the river and promotes resource protection.

Present Situation: The River Canyon Zone contains trails descending the rim at Sheeps Crossing, Chiflo, Big Arsenic, Little Arsenic, La Junta, and El Aguaje. These trails descend the vertical walls of the Canyons and have required major construction including elaborate stone and masonry work. These trails require frequent maintenance. There is also a trail in the canyon bottom from Big Arsenic Campground to the confluence of the Rio Grande and Red River.

Management Prescription

Provide additional trail segments to connect the existing fragmented trail system.



Management Actions

A trail will be constructed along the Red River from La Junta Point to the Red River Fish Hatchery. A foot bridge across the Red River will be constructed at La Junta Point to connect the Recreation Area trail system with the U.S. Forest Service Cebolla Mesa Trail. A foot bridge will also be constructed across the Rio Grande to allow use of the west bank area. This expansion will occur only after use levels on the east bank reach capacity 80 percent of the time.



Canyon Ecosystem (R-4)

Objective: To maintain the existing canyon ecosystem.

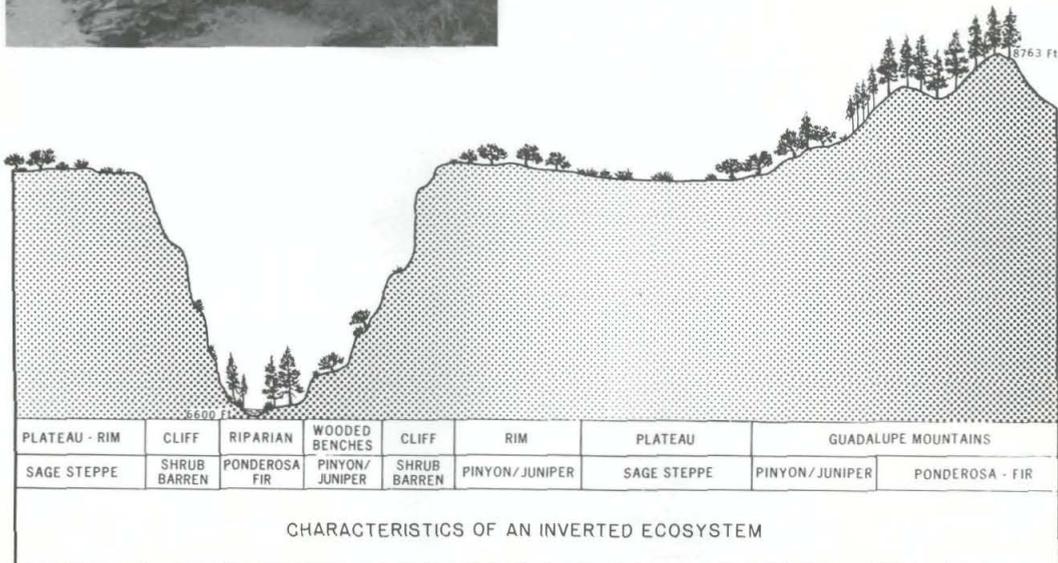
Present Situation: Canyons in the Recreation Area have an unusual inverted ecosystem. That is, the lower elevations of the canyon bottoms contain ponderosa pine while juniper are found on the canyon rims. This is the reverse of that normally expected in the area. However, the trees in the canyon bottom are not regenerating, causing a gradual loss of the existing ecosystem.

Management Prescription

Develop a reforestation plan for the Recreation Area. This plan will address planting of new trees in the canyon bottom to provide for continuation of the inverted ecosystem.

Management Actions

The BLM will study the activities that could affect this ecosystem including recreational use, fire suppression, and grazing. The study results will help determine future management actions to maintain the existing ecosystem. Planting new trees would be done after the completion of the study and a reforestation plan.



Fisheries (R-5)

Objective: To manage the aquatic habitat in the Rio Grande and Red River to achieve its full potential for fisheries.

Present Situation: Many years of data on the amount of water in these rivers has been obtained. This information shows extremely low flows occasionally occur in the Rio Grande. The point at which fisheries are adversely affected by low water is not known. A study of the impacts of these low flows has been initiated by BLM, U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Management Prescription

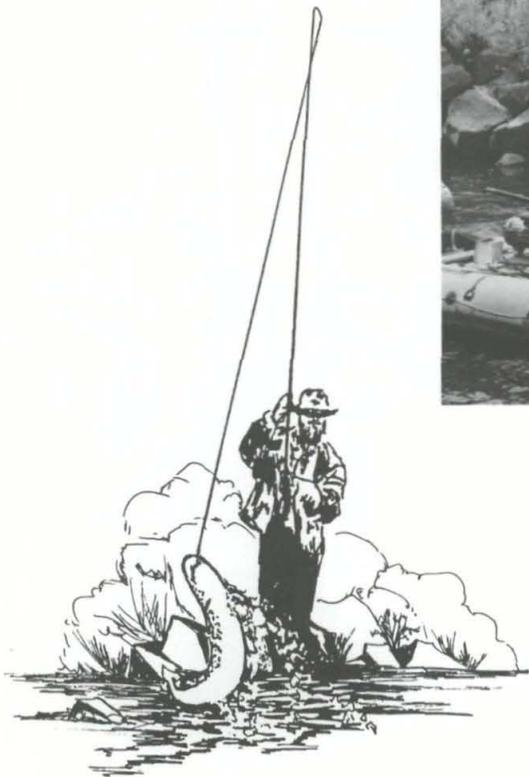
The flows in the rivers should not be allowed to go below volumes needed to sustain fish life. BLM does not have control, but should exert as much influence as possible and work with New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and appropriate water associations in Colorado and New Mexico.

A Fish Habitat Management Plan should be completed and habitat projects implemented as recommended by the plan.

Management Actions

A minimum and optimum flow analysis will be conducted on the Rio Grande and Red River in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, and other affected parties.

A fisheries habitat Management Plan will be completed within five years of approval of this document.



Boating (R-6)

Objective: To promote safety in boating as well as provide boating information and orientation.

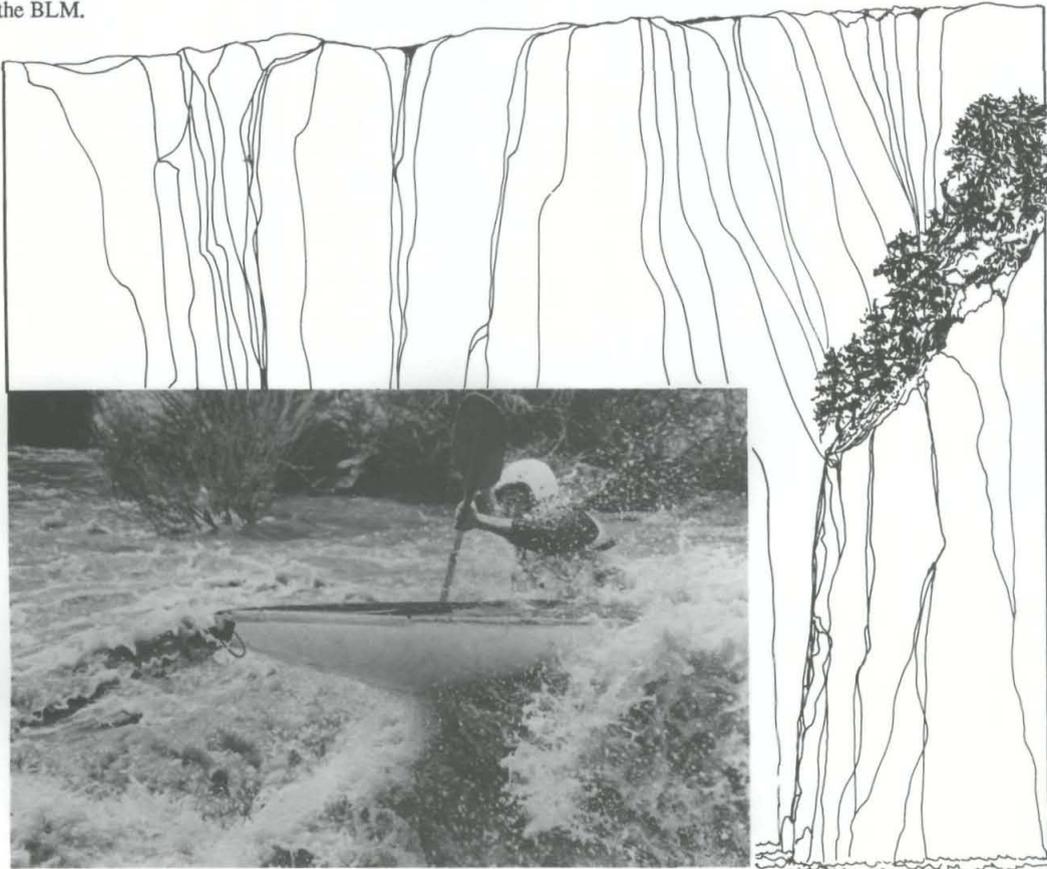
Present Situation: White water boating occurs on the Rio Grande but is extremely dangerous through much of the Recreation Area. Rapids here are rated Class VI, which means that they can not be run without risk of life. There have been very few successful boating runs in this area. The Rio Grande below Little Arsenic Springs is safer but requires carrying equipment from the rim to the river.

Management Prescription

Registration at the Visitor Center will be required to run the Class VI section of the Rio Grande (Sheeps Crossing to Little Arsenic Springs). Permits will be required for commercial and private boaters to enter the river at Little Arsenic Springs. Numbers of private boaters will not be limited. Commercial boaters are limited to two launches with a maximum party size of 15 persons per day. Schedules for private and commercial launches will be decided by the BLM.

Management Actions

Boating safety signs will installed at Sheeps Crossing and Chiflo trailheads. These signs will instruct boaters to register at the Visitor Center. Boating information will also be posted at Little Arsenic Campground, the entrance station, Visitor Center and in the Recreation Area brochure.



Plan Implementation & Monitoring

Implementation Strategy

Implementation of the actions identified in the previous section will occur in three phases, each based on the amount of recreational use at the Wild Rivers Recreation Area. By basing the phases on recreational use, BLM hopes to maintain a quality experience for the visitor while protecting the natural resources even as use levels increase.

Basic Phase

The basic phase is designed to bring existing facilities and services to the minimum standard necessary to meet existing needs. This phase has two parts. The first is to complete those actions requiring immediate attention. The second is to complete needed improvements to existing facilities. The plan will remain in the basic phase until recreational use levels reach the 30,000 visits-per-year threshold. After that use level is reached this plan calls for existing facilities to be expanded through the construction of new sites on new locations.

Intermediate Phase

The intermediate phase is designed to maintain the basic phase plus develop new sites to meet increased demand. This phase is also divided into two parts. The first is intended to resolve existing problems related to recreational use. The second identifies initiatives to maintain the desired experience level. When carrying capacity is reached (estimated at 50,000 visits-per-year) the Optimum Phase will be implemented.

Optimum Phase

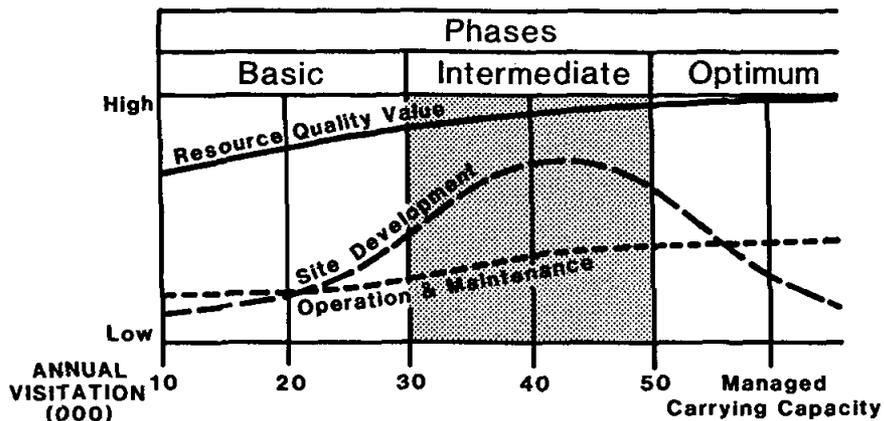
This level represents the Recreation Area's maximum visitor capacity. At this point, new development would stop and management would focus on maintaining existing facilities, resources and experience levels, requiring that use limitations be imposed.

Importance of Implementation

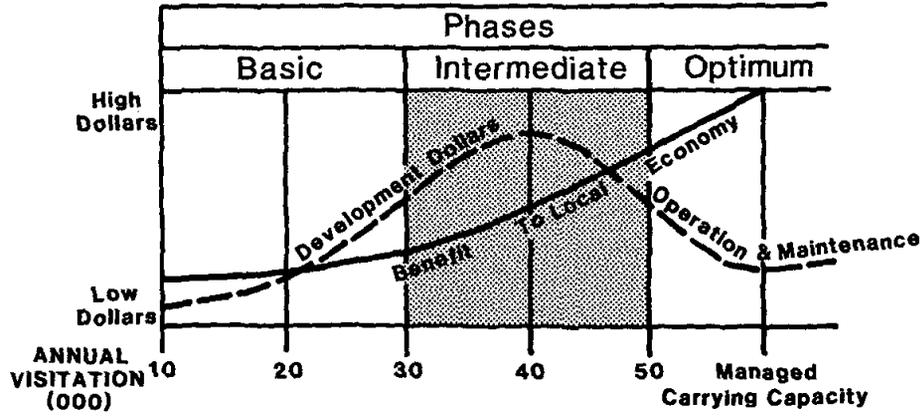
The timing of management actions is often a critical factor in meeting management goals. The principle variable controlling timing of actions is having the necessary funding when it is needed. The following graphs generally show the costs and benefits that dollar investment would have on the Recreation Area. (Annual visitation is estimated to be approximately 20,000 in 1988.)

The natural resource capability and managed carrying capacity threshold of the Recreation Area is estimated to be around 60,000 annual visits. When this threshold is reached, the administration of the site would require a reservation system which would distribute peak attendance periods over a broader season of use. This will allow annual visits to increase while regulating intense use periods which can severely impact the natural resource.

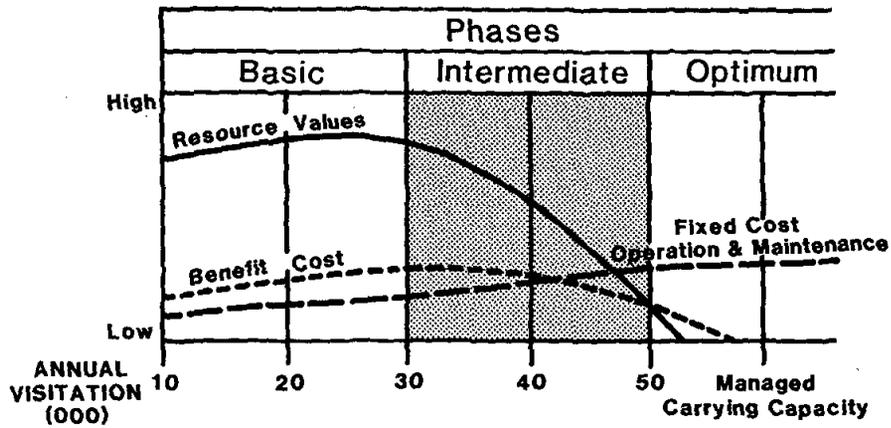
[A.] Resource quality can increase as dollars are invested in site development, operation and maintenance.



[B.] The local economy can realize a net benefit for dollars invested because the attractiveness of the area will draw more visitors who will stay longer and in turn spend more dollars locally.



[C.] If funding support is not timely or is mismanaged, the values of the Recreation Area will diminish, potential benefits to the local economy will dwindle, and long term maintenance cost will show a gradual increase.



Implementation Plan

Management Actions have previously been identified in the Management Direction section of this document. These individual Management Actions must now be reviewed together to identify the priorities, funding needs, and in general, give them some order to provide the basis for an implementation plan.

The chart on the next page is the implementation plan for the actions identified in the Management Direction section. Each action listed on the chart has a title and code (e.g. Scenic Quality A-2) which is the same as appear in the titles in the Management Direction chapter where more information can be found.

Any useful implementation plan must be responsive to change as priorities and funding change and as some actions are completed and new ones are added. The following chart is not designed to track specific actions. It does, however, display general priorities and show when certain use levels will trigger management actions. A more detailed Implementation Plan can be written and revised as needed, using the following chart as a guide.

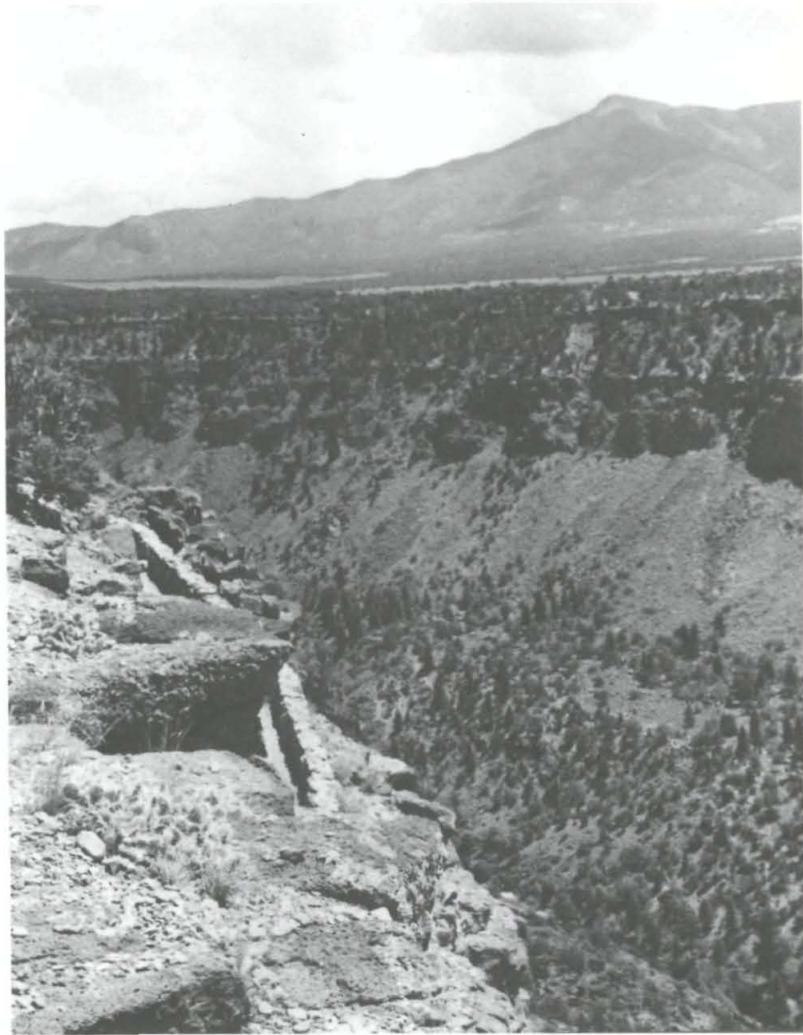
Monitoring Plan

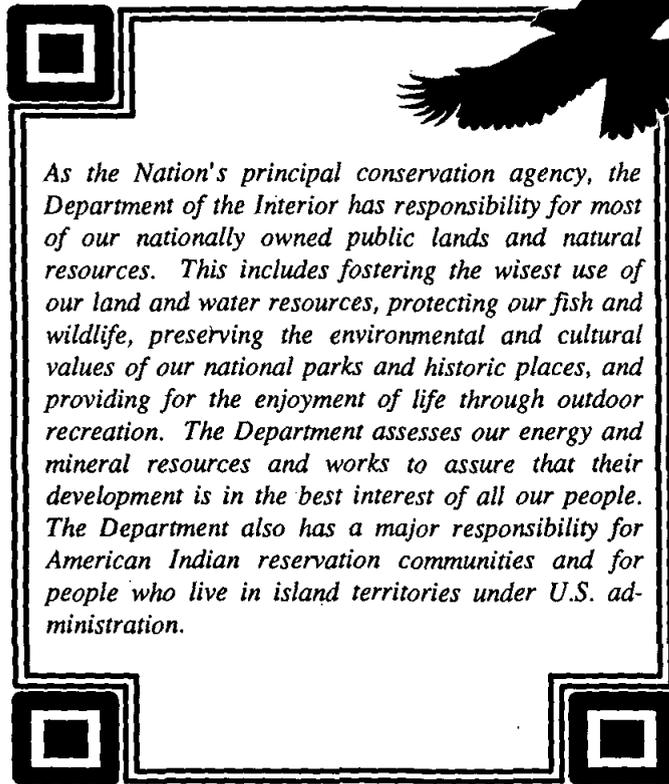
The Actions displayed on the following chart [e.g., Scenic Quality (A-1)] often actually represent a "Category" where, in fact, there are many actions to be completed. In order to track specific actions more precisely, the action titles and code numbers can serve as a "menu" or "directory" for computer storage of more detailed information. For example, a spread sheet program could be used to track actions completed, due dates, assignments, costs, etc. This spread sheet program would provide quick access to the status of plan implementation at any time. This computer application of the plan would also prove very useful in budget preparation. Having the information in this form would allow for quick calculations in a variety of combinations.

WILD RIVERS RECREATION AREA		IMPLEMENTATION PLAN					FEBRUARY 1988
		Basic Phase		Intermediate Phase		Optimal Phase	
ANNUAL VISITATION		10,000 VISITS	20,000 VISITS	30,000 VISITS	40,000 VISITS	50,000 VISITS	
		1988 COSTS DOLLARS	ESTIMATED COSTS DOLLARS	ESTIMATED COSTS DOLLARS	ESTIMATED COSTS DOLLARS	ESTIMATED COSTS DOLLARS	
SITE OPERATIONS	BLM SALARIES	Site Administration (A-3) Page 16	70,000	80,000	90,000	95,000	100,000
		Grounds Maintenance (A-8) Page 19	30,000	40,000	50,000	55,000	60,000
	Total Annual Salary Cost		100,000	120,000	140,000	150,000	160,000
	CONTRACTS AND CAPITOL COSTS	Road Conditions (A-7) Page 19	1,000	1,500	2,000	2,500	3,000
		Trails Maintenance (R-3) Page 16	1,100	1,500	2,000	2,500	3,000
Grounds Maintenance (A-8) Page 19		12,000	14,000	16,000	18,000	20,000	
Total Annual Contract and Capitol Cost		14,000	17,000	20,000	23,000	26,000	
TOTAL ANNUAL OPERATIONS COST		114,000	137,000	160,000	172,000	186,000	
SITE DEVELOPMENT	PROGRAMS	SCENIC QUALITY (A-1) Page 14 LAND OWNERSHIP & DESIGNATIONS (A-2) Page 15 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION (A-4) Page 17 OFF-ROAD VEHICLES (A-10) Page 20 WATER QUALITY (A-11) Page 21 FIRE MANAGEMENT (A-12) Page 21 BOATING (R-6) Page 51 FISHERIES (R-5) Page 50 VEGETATION (A-13) Page 22 CANYON ECOSYSTEM (R-4) Page 49 WILDLIFE (I-10) Page 31 WILDLIFE (A-6) Page 18 WILDLIFE (E-3) Page 35 PREHISTORIC & HISTORIC SITES (A-5) Page 17					
	CONSTRUCTION	SIGNS (A-9) Page 20 INTERPRETATIVE DISPLAYS (I-4) Page 28 AMPHITHEATER (I-5) Page 28 DAY USE (I-1) Page 26 OVERFLOW CAMPING (I-7) Page 30 ENTRANCE STATION (E-1) Page 34 VISITOR CENTER (I-3) Page 27 RECREATIONAL VEHICLES (I-9) Page 31 GROUP CAMPING (I-8) Page 30 ROAD CONDITIONS (A-7) Page 19 RIM TRAILS (I-2) Page 26 TRAILS (R-3) Page 48 CAMPGROUNDS (I-6) Page 29 RED RIVER PICNIC AREA (R-2) Page 47 DAY USE (E-2) Page 34 CAMPING (R-1) Page 47 FUTURE USE & DEV. (G-1) Page 42 FUTURE USE & DEV. (W-1) Page 38					

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As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historic places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interest of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.



Wild Rivers Recreation Area